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Entered

THE UNSEEN ASSASSINS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE GREAT ILLUSION

THE FRUITS OF VICTORY

THE PUBLIC MIND

IF BRITAIN IS TO LIVE

**MUST BRITAIN TRAVEL THE
MOSCOW ROAD?**

THE MONEY GAME

THE UNSEEN ASSASSINS

BY
NORMAN ANGELL
*Author of *The Great Illusion**



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"Truth comes out of error more easily than out of confusion."

FRANCIS BACON.

"Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment nothing can fail ; without it nothing can succeed. Consequently he who moulds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions. He makes statutes and decisions possible or impossible to be executed."

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

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OUR FAILURE TO SEE THE VISIBLE

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PART I

OUR FAILURE TO SEE THE VISIBLE

CHAPTER I

WHAT THIS BOOK IS ABOUT

IT is a very simple truth which I am trying to state in these pages ; yet it is one which evades us or which we evade. It is this :

The greatest evils which devastate our civilisation and at times nearly destroy it are not due in the main either to the wickedness or the evil intention of men ; nor to the lack of knowledge, in the sense that we lack the knowledge to release atomic energy, or to communicate with Mars, or cure cancer. Those evils are due to the failure to apply to our social relationships knowledge which is of practically universal possession, often self-evident in the facts of daily life and experience, and to derive from that already available knowledge the relevant social truth.

We disregard knowledge which we possess, though we are unaware of that disregard.

We do not *desire* to create social or economic evils, to impose injustice and bring about war, but we

apply policies in which those results are inherent because we fail to see the implication of the policies. Those unperceived implications are the Unseen Assassins of our peace and welfare. Yet they would be visible to quite ordinary mental eyesight if it had not been artificially distorted or rendered defective from entirely preventable causes.

The proposition implies, of course, certain subsidiary ones, as that the opinion or attitude of the ordinary man is not a negligible factor in human affairs ; that, on the contrary, it generally determines public policy and the nature of our society ; that such evils as war are not imposed upon us against our will or our desire by small minorities or vested interests. Such minorities, to achieve their ends, must first make their will or desire that of the mass of men. It is that will of the ordinary man, however created, which remains the determining factor.

A further subsidiary factor is involved.

If it be true that in the gravest decisions affecting the common welfare the great mass of men disregard what they already know, it will serve little purpose for education to endow them with further knowledge. They can disregard the new knowledge as easily as they did the old, unless to the possession of knowledge are added the skills necessary to apply it to social purposes, skills which the organised education of our schools and colleges very inadequately develops, if indeed at times it does not tend powerfully to inhibit them. It is

here suggested that education, relatively to its success in enabling us to understand and manage matter, has failed in enabling us to understand and manage our society. The distance travelled since (for instance) "the brief gleam of Greece" in the conquest of matter would have caused old Athenians to regard us as more mighty than the gods of their Olympus. But we have made no corresponding advance upon their achievement in so interpreting common facts as to see the social truths, which enable men to maintain a society giving the greatest chance of "the good life."

The comparison just drawn suggests a still further implication of the original proposition: that the effect which the obscure psychological forces of our nature have upon our social conduct depends largely upon the way in which we have learned to read facts. The fact that we are not guided by the things all know, or might easily know, is usually explained in terms of an inherent and inevitable irrationality of human nature: the instinctive elements in its motivation. "We are what we are", with our nationalist and other fears, suspicions, touchiness, pugnacities; these things are, we are so often told, our biological inheritance, and mere intellectual effort, reason and thought, will never alter "nature itself".

Yet conduct may vary enormously not merely as between individuals but as between one generation and the next. The selfsame phenomena of lightning and thunder and storms, which cause the

jungle father to go through life daily in fear of evil spirits, prompting him, it may be, to make human sacrifices thereto, provoke in the mission-trained son an entirely different conduct. The difference in conduct is not due to any biological change. Both types of reaction are equally manifestations of human nature ; but the son has learned to interpret phenomena in a new way, by a different use of the tool of reason. He sees things differently though they are the same things and common things. The innate fears and passions may well remain the same ; they run in other channels. To suggest that we must always react to racial, linguistic, religious, caste or national differences as we have done in the past, and that those differences must always produce one particular political and social result unless there is some biological change, is to disregard familiar experience.

It may be argued, in the case of physical phenomena, that the difference in the way of seeing things which distinguish the savage father from the educated son has depended upon the latter's use of the long accumulated learning of others, the fact that there is made available to him in a few hours a knowledge in physical science which it has taken others generations to uncover with the aid of instruments and a technique which themselves have been slowly evolved through the centuries. But that is much less true of those conclusions upon which social conduct depends. There the understanding of the data upon which

we judge does not depend upon experiments in laboratories, or training in workshops ; the *method of interpretation*, not the availability of knowledge, is what makes the difference.

The Greeks, with little of that vast knowledge of the physical world which we have accumulated slowly through centuries since their time, simply by a new way of thought about facts which were just as available to the surrounding barbarian as to themselves, broke free from the dark prepossessions of savagery, the taboos, fears and hateful ferocities of jungle or forest ancestry, at least sufficiently to make the human mind an instrument of reason in the ordering of society. Not merely was it not a difference of physical tissue, of grey matter, glands, blood, which distinguished them from neighbours still indulging in human sacrifice or stricken by the terrors of witchcraft, nor was it any difference in availability of knowledge : it was a difference of intellectual technique, a skill which can be acquired as other skills can be acquired. Our problem is to improve that particular skill. So little have we improved upon theirs in that sphere that we have no assurance yet that physical science will be used mainly for the service of man at all. It is still as likely to be put to the service of bestial orgies of destructive hate and terror. The organised learning of our schools and universities has not developed that particular skill which might help us to apply science to social welfare, but has itself been at times the main obstacle to

improvement. It has often definitely encouraged the growth of evils like that nationalism which now devastates Europe ; and has helped to render the victims of those evils incapable of seeing them as evils. It has not helped us to detect the unseen assassins. Too often it has helped to render us blind to their presence.

The object of these pages is to simplify the work of detection for the ordinary man, to help him to see at what point one of these intellectual assassins has crept into some generally accepted principle or policy. The methods and principles applied will not be discussed *in abstracto*, but by application to definite problems with which the ordinary citizen is confronted, mainly in that field where the danger is greatest, the field of international relations.

The reasons which have prompted me to make that attempt will explain also part of the method pursued. For many years it has been my business to take stock at intervals of the way things were going in the field of international affairs. Once a week, once a month, once a year, as the case might be, I had to put myself a question : In what main respects have things gone wrong, and why ? Where does the chief danger lie ? How precisely has it arisen ? In comparing and classifying the notes made for the purpose of that task—now going back (alas !) for over thirty years—I find that in the final analysis just a few major or parent fallacies emerge ; and in pushing the query still further, raising, that is, the question why those particular

fallacies should persist, I have been led to the criticism of education and learning above outlined.

The argument is developed broadly in this way :

The political, economic and social problems of society which, by the theory of democracy, the ordinary voter is called upon to decide, have become so numerous and complex that no layman can possibly be fully acquainted with each of them.

Yet the opinion of the ordinary man, " public " opinion, is nevertheless in the long run decisive in public policy. Governments are obliged, as recent history shows, to take cognisance of popular feeling, tradition, prejudice, particularly in such matters as war and peace, or the surrender of national sovereignty, as a condition of creating an international order.

In many spheres, in religion notably, popular feeling has become more social, more civilised, by a clearer perception of its social implications. This was not achieved by the layman mastering all the learning of the theologians, but by perceiving more clearly the nature of certain underlying premises which the theologian accepted without question.

The specialist's learning had often no relation to those premises. Thus it did not help the specialists to be judge of the validity of the premises : often indeed it made it more difficult for him so to judge ; and made it more easy for the layman, since his mind was not confused and carried off into by-ways by irrelevant learning.

This gives a hint of what should be the relation of the layman to the expert in government and politics. The layman cannot be governed by experts ; but he cannot govern without them.

The layman must decide what he wants, must know enough not to want contradictory things, and must employ the expert for providing the technical means of attainment.

In the maintenance of general social health, medicine affords a useful analogy of both the line of progress and the layman's rôle. The real achievements of medicine in saving and prolonging human life have been in the domain of preventing the spread of disease by prophylaxis. For one life saved or redeemed by cures, a thousand have been saved by the clearing away of the older plagues, Black Deaths, leprosy, etc.

That really great achievement of medicine has been due to a widespread understanding of the process of disease transmission by micro-organisms. Because the layman—in the shape of municipal and other authorities charged with the guardianship of public health, and the voters who sanction the necessary measures—has been able to understand what is, at bottom, the very simple notion of disease-transmission by infection and contagion, the avoidance of vast miseries which were once regarded as quite unavoidable, as acts of God, has been made possible.

Not much more difficult of popular understanding is the nature of those principles of social prophylaxis

which, in the international field particularly, must be observed if we are to avoid these scourges of war and economic chaos which, unlike leprosy and plague, we have not yet managed to abolish. Simple as those principles are, they are evidently not generally understood, since their violation is demanded again and again by all nations in the name of high virtues like Patriotism. Popular feeling has come, perhaps, to hate war as much doubtless as the populace hated plagues, but the relation between its prevention and the observance of the rules necessary thereto is as little realised in any vivid sense, as were, in mediæval times, the principles of sanitation. Until the end of the last war, the necessary measures for preventing war (e.g. a League of Nations) would have been regarded as as much an impious attempt to defeat inevitable destiny or the will of God as would sanitation in the thirteenth century.

Although the understanding of the social principles which would enable the layman to avoid so much of international trouble is certainly within his comprehension; and although the understanding of the vast complexities which arise once the disease has taken hold cannot be brought within his comprehension, the method of education, both scholastic and adult, is to present the student with detailed aspects of the disease—innumerable problems, the long history through the centuries of this or that quarrel—instead of showing the relation between the outbreak of the disease and

the disregard of fundamental but simple social principles.

One major case stands out as illustration. We adopt in the international field as the best means of enabling nations to live at peace and in fruitful co-operation, the method of anarchy, the method, that is, of having no government at all ; although we are aware that the method would not answer in the case of individuals, and although we accept for nations a standard of morality lower than that which we expect of individuals. So little has our scholastic education, in the picture of the world which it presents to the younger generation, brought out the anomalous nature of this fact, that any attempt to correct it by institutions of government is regarded by most educated folk as anomalous and fantastic. Further, education has, by its general trend and bias, especially in its teaching of history, tended to harden the anarchic assumptions by confirming a purely nationalist outlook.

But the fundamental defect goes deeper : The general method of organised scholastic education still encourages the scholar (though accepted educational theory condemns the practice) to snatch at "facts", events, odds and ends of historical, geographical, physical and linguistic data, instead of developing the capacity for synthesis which might enable him to see the processes of social life where, at present, there is the greatest need of wisdom.

The product of education is still notably deficient

in three main particulars. First, it fails to develop sufficient skill in the interpretation of facts, in reading the meaning, particularly the social meaning, of the commonplaces of life ; secondly, it fails to leave on the mind of the student any clear notion of the necessary mechanism of society, of the almost mechanical principles by which alone some smoothness of working may be achieved ; and, thirdly, it fails to convey any adequate sense of the shortcomings, as social beings, of our nature as revealed in the history of man. Because of this, the student has little sense of the temperamental traps into which all of us (particularly in the course of necessary co-operations, like those between nations) are perpetually being led by our innate pugnacities, cruelties, irrationalisms. Such knowledge as he has of the massacres, burnings, ferocities, which mark man's history, come to him, not as beacons marking reefs upon which he or his nation may be wrecked, but merely as so many examples of the wickedness of peoples different from himself ; thus hiding one truth and perpetuating a falsehood which will prevent him seeing other truths ; truths that would be clear and self-evident but for the cultivated distortions of his education.

CHAPTER II

JOHN SMITH'S DIFFICULTY

A brief sketch of some of the problems which Mr. John Smith as voter (and so our ruler and the guardian of our fortunes as we are of his) is asked to decide ; and the way by which alone, according to the most approved educational method, he may become wise about those problems.

PLEASE consider this situation. Here am I, plain John Smith, hard enough put to it to earn my living, provide for my family, and meet the daily drive of life ; worried about my job or about the decline of my business, and a multitude of domestic problems ; yet compelled, whether I will or not, to make, hurriedly, casually, as the result of a mere spare-time attention, decisions in matters which have baffled experts who have spent whole lives in study of them. I am asked to say, by my vote, what kind of solution shall be given to such problems as unemployment and war (to take just two of many) ; to say whether the right solution of unemployment, for instance, is along the line of Socialism or by the adoption of some form of Protection ; or by a new monetary policy. Think what that one group of questions alone involves. I—absorbed with my doctoring or dentistry, or shop, or labour in the factory—have to decide not merely such issues as that between

Free Trade and Protection, about which specialists, economists who have lived with the subject, disagree ; but I have to decide what kind of Protection, whether it shall be of the new Imperial kind—" Empire Free Trade "—or the old unqualified kind. Just now I am hotly canvassed on that question.

For an opinion to be worth two straws on just this last point a man should know a good deal about the physical and political make-up of the Empire on the one hand and the rest of the world on the other ; something of the politics of the various Dominions in order to judge of the chances of their abandoning their own Protection ; whether Preference would raise our own cost of manufacture and prices to the consumer ; how near to saturation point the markets of the Dominions have come, and literally hundreds of statistical, political and economic facts of that character. And then he would only touch the fringe of this one small detail of public policy. There are those who tell me, and they are forming parties, that neither the old Free Trade, nor the old Protection nor the new Protection, really touch the matter at all, and that in so far as fiscal policies affect the problem it will be by means of import boards and bulk purchase. Then, there are others who tell me that of much more importance than these is the question of monetary policy. Some specialists—again men who have devoted their whole lives to the subject—say that the bankers have been pursuing a wrong policy ;

that the fall of prices which has played its part in the depression could have been prevented. But other specialists, just as expert, deny this. And I will defy anyone without special training to follow the amazing technicalities of the currency problem as they discuss it.

But, again, that is only one tiny corner of my problem as a voter. I am aware that much of our trouble this last ten years is a legacy of the war; I have a quite definite sense that that war did a great deal to wreck the economic security of this country, although we were victors, and that war in the future is, if possible, to be avoided. But even there, on the question of what we want in the matter, the guidance of the wise ones is at variance. Sir Arthur Keith tells me that the disappearance of war would be fatal to mankind.¹ He is a

¹ Although it is difficult to see quite where Sir Arthur Keith does stand. In his Rectorial address at Aberdeen he said: "Give our prejudices a place in our civilisation, but keep them under the control of reason. . . . The national heart must never master the national head. . . . If union between our nationalities is to withstand the stresses of conflicting interest, the heart has to be strengthened by clear-sighted intelligence." Which is pretty much the position taken in this book. Yet in the same address he also said:

"To obtain universal and perennial peace you must also reckon the price you will have to pay for it. The price is the racial birthright that Nature has bestowed on you. To attain such an ideal world peoples of all countries and continents must pool not only their national interests, but they must also pool their bloods.

"Black, brown, yellow, and white must give and take in marriage, and distribute in a common progeny the inheritance which each has come by in their uphill struggle through the leagues of prehistoric time towards the present.

"If this scheme of universal deracialisation ever comes before you as a matter of practical politics—as the sole way of establishing peace and

scientist, wiser in these matters presumably than I am. And he is not alone. Other great folk have written similarly. But even if, greatly daring, I pit my judgment against his and decide we don't want war, on which side am I to vote in order to bring about the end of war? Political specialists tell me we must disarm. But naval specialists tell me it would be fatal to peace if we disarmed any more. And even if—again greatly daring—I plump for disarmament, I find myself entangled in a choice of policies which means passing judgment on such things as the wisdom of yielding in some measure to the French point of view on trained reserves; on security; on our commitments under Art. XVI, under Locarno; on the right size of a battleship for Great Britain; the wisdom or otherwise of maintaining naval bases on the other side of the world; whether it is better to press for budgetary limitation or limitation of material; the goodwill in all parts of our world—I feel certain both head and heart will rise against it.

“Race prejudice has to be given a recognised place in our modern civilisation. You may demand of me whether I have reckoned the cost of maintaining our racialised world. Yes, I have. It means the continuation of Nature's old scheme of inter-tribal rivalries and eternal competition.

“Without competition mankind can never progress; the progress is competition, nay, race prejudice and, what is the same thing, national antagonism, has to be purchased, not with gold, but with life.

“Nature throughout the past has demanded that a people who seek independence as well as peace can obtain these privileges only in one way—by being prepared to sacrifice their blood to secure them.

“Nature keeps her human orchard healthy by pruning; war is her pruning hook. We cannot dispense with her services. This harsh and repugnant forecast of man's future is wrung from me. The future of my dreams is a warless world.”

problem of the Freedom of the Seas ; relations with America. Again, all that is just one corner of the question of peace. There is the League. Lord Beaverbrook and some others beg me, whatever I do, if I love England, not to support the League ; implore me to withdraw my subscriptions and support from organisations that favour it. Yet there are others, certainly as well equipped as Lord Beaverbrook to know, who tell me that, if the League goes, all hope of permanent peace goes. And again, if I decide for the League, that is not the end of it. What shall be our commitments under it ? Shall we agree definitely beforehand to arbitrate ? And if a nation refuses to arbitrate and goes to war with another, should we undertake to help that other nation in return for being helped ourselves in like circumstances ? A great many say emphatically no. But others again, so far as I can learn every bit as competent, say just as emphatically yes.

Again I have chosen but two out of many groups of questions, upon which I must have opinions when I vote. At the last by-election I found questions were discussed which ranged from the taxation of site values to claims of Roman Catholics for assistance to their schools ; from infinitely complicated Coal Mines Acts and all the conflict of views thereon to the new traffic regulations ; from India (concerning about a fifth of mankind, a very specialist and very complex subject) to Sunday Observance ; from the Charing Cross Bridge scheme to Trade Union

rights ; from the tariff on dyestuffs to Prayer Book reform ; from the Agricultural Marketing Bill to insanity as grounds for divorce ; from new old-age pensions to regulations for the sale of cheese ; from Bills dealing with rabbits to the increase of the fiduciary currency ; from the registration of architects to the formation of Consumers' Councils ; from temperance to the humane slaughter of animals ; from musical copyright to capital punishment ; from workmen's compensation to the regulation of advertisements ; vivisection ; admission of the press to the meetings of local authorities' committees. . . .¹

¹ The order paper of the House of Commons for June 4th, 1931, includes these bills :

Nursing Profession (Wages and Hours) Bill ; Buildings (Escape from Fire) Bill ; Petroleum Bill : Wireless Telegraphy (Bedridden Persons) Bill ; Spiritualism and Psychical Research (Exemption) Bill ; Protection of Animals Bill ; Coal Mines (Minimum Wage) Act, 1912 (Amendment) Bill ; Works Councils Bill ; Local Authorities (Municipal Savings Banks) Bill ; Advertisements Regulation (Amendment) Bill ; Mining Subsidence (Compensation) Bill ; Solicitors Bill ; Employment of Disabled Ex-service Men Bill ; Religious Persecutions (Abolition) Bill ; Protection of Dogs Bill ; Coal Mines (Protection of Animals) Bill ; Performing Animals (Regulation) Bill ; Hire Purchase Bill ; Married Women (Torts) Bill ; Juries (Exemption of Firemen) Bill ; Industrial and Provident Societies (Amendment) Bill ; Retail Meat Dealers' Shops (Sunday Closing) Bill ; National House-building Bill ; National Industrial Council Bill ; Proprietary Medicines Bill ; Assurance Companies Bill ; Trout (Scotland) Bill ; Wild Birds Protection (Scotland) Bill ; Sunday Observance Act (1780) Amendment (No. 2) Bill ; Rights of Railway Passengers Bill ; Rent (Reduction and Control) Bill ; Adoption of Children (Scotland) Bill ; Access to Mountains Bill ; Law of Property Act (1925) Amendment Bill ; Racecourse Betting Act (1928) Amendment Bill ; Hospitals (Relief from Rating) Bill ; Exportation of Horses Bill ; Miners (Pensions) Bill ; Criminal Justice (Amendment) Bill ; Sale of Cheese Bill ; Third Parties (Rights against Insurers) Bill ; British Museum and National Gallery (Overseas Loans) Bill ; Grey Seals (Protection) Bill ; Probation of Offenders (Scotland) Bill.

I am sometimes told that I must leave these things to the expert. Which expert? For on almost every one of these subjects one expert tells me one thing and another expert another. And how shall the experts decide between conflicting desires or wants of the electorate? My neighbour, Hodge the farmer, thinks it wicked that I should be allowed to buy New Zealand butter. He wants a stiff tariff on butter in order to compel me to buy his. But as his is made at home by his wife in the intervals of attending to the baby, it is both inferior to and dearer than the New Zealand product which is made in a co-operative creamery with all the most scientific equipment. So I differ strongly from Hodge as to his right to compel me to buy his inferior butter at a higher price. Is it for the expert to decide which is right? And is he to be an expert on butter or on ethics?

I have felt at times that I would inform myself systematically on some of these facts; and beginning with the most important, that I would set about the understanding of war. (For youngsters that I loved were killed or blinded or maimed or sent mad, and many a home I knew smashed, by the last war.) What causes war? Again the experts seem to disagree.

How do I set about it? A librarian once told me that he calculated that something in the neighbourhood of ten thousand books had been written about war. Does one begin at No. 1 and go on until the ten thousand have been consumed?

Plainly not. Does one begin historically—find out who began it and why? But on that subject the documents are mountainous; whole libraries in themselves. And very contradictory. The account given by, say, German books differs radically from that given by the French or the English or the American. But the French also differ from the English and the English from the American. And there are rival schools within the national groups. And this, remember, on the simpler questions of fact, what actually took place, who mobilised first, who refused arbitration, and so forth. When we come to causes the differences are multiplied endlessly.

To twenty persons taken at hazard I once put the question: "What causes war? What stands in the way of peace?" And I got twenty different answers; each, for the most part, contradicting another. I was told that war is the inevitable outcome of the economic competition of nations; that it is the outcome of nationalist prides and patriotisms with which economics have no concern; that it arises because the motive of self-interest overrides all moral considerations; that it arises because when moral questions are involved men take no account of material interest; that it has its roots in innate selfishness; that it is the standing proof of man's immeasurable capacity for complete self-sacrifice; that it is deliberately planned by capitalists or financiers for their own ends; that since the last war plainly worsened the position of

capital, shattered the financial structure of great nations, produced economic and financial revolutions, ruined trade in vanquished and victorious nations alike, the real buttress of peace is modern commerce with its intricate interdependence of interest ; that wars arise from the machinations of secret diplomacy and that popular control by referendum or otherwise is the remedy ; that the fomentation of popular passions, always unstable and incalculable, by a demagogic press, is one of the main causes of war. . . .

All of which seems to indicate that we do not know what destroys us. We do not know what results are being produced by the forces and policies of our time, by ourselves, that is ; do not know which of the things we do are harmless, which murderous. It would seem that learning should by this time have given us some hint of the probable results of our actions, of the nature of a disease which has afflicted man as long as we know his story. But learning apparently has no agreed opinion, no agreed conclusion.

Early in the war I joined a study circle to study the causes of the war. Eminent teachers gave their time to help us and prepared a preliminary syllabus. The circle was composed largely of elderly working men and their wives and the ground it was proposed we should study included this :

A history of the Austrian Empire as throwing light on Austrian policy before the war ; a history of the differences which have arisen between

Germans, Magyars, Croats, Serbians, Slovenes, Ruthenians, Italians, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles ; a history of the issues of the Serbo-Bulgarian war of 1885, of the tariff wars between Austria and Serbia ; of the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, of the formation of the Balkan League and the troubles which led to the Second Balkan war ; of the Turkish invasions ; of the emergence of the independent Balkan nations from Turkish supremacy ; of Austrian and Russian policy ; of Russia's claim to be the leader and protector of the Slav peoples ; of her interference in Balkan politics and her designs on Constantinople ; of the chief European Alliances ; of the Balance of Power ; of the conflicts between Slav and Teuton ; of the development of German policy since the unification ; of the wars of 1864, 1866 and 1870 ; of the position of Prussia in Germany ; of the attitude of the Social Democrats ; of the difference between the new Germany and the old ; some account of the influence of the newer German philosophies of Nietzsche, Haeckel, Treitschke, Feuerbach, Schopenhauer as the reaction against those of Kant, Hegel and Fichte ; of the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine and its effect on Franco-German relations ; of the problems arising from the partitions of Poland between Prussia, Russia and Austria. We were also to study the story of German fear of the Slav menace ; of the influence of the pan-German school ; of German colonial and naval expansion and the course of Anglo-German relations ; of the

formation of the Triple Alliance, the Dual Alliance, and the Franco-British Entente ; of the guarantee of Belgian neutrality.

These studies were to help us to form opinions on the questions of the Roumanians in Transylvania ; the Italians in the Trentino and Trieste ; Italian interests in Dalmatia and Albania ; the problem of Schleswig-Holstein ; the position of Bohemia ; and on the wider questions which would come up at the settlement : the principle of nationality ; the use of Plebiscites ; the value of guarantees ; the payment of indemnities ; the validity of treaties and of international law ; the competition of armaments ; the grouping of power ; the effects of absolutism and democracy upon national policies ; imperialism and autonomy ; arbitration, disarmament.

Our teachers intimated that that was merely a preliminary list of the subjects we should study, but we were to begin with that little lot. I found after some months that I had only got as far as the earlier Turkish invasions and made a rough calculation that we should reach the problems of the forthcoming peace treaty in the course of eighty years or thereabouts.

Later I joined an Institute founded for the purpose of studying international affairs. It has many lectures ; two or three a week. They have included the following subjects, in about the order given : The International Drug Traffic ; Ores and Industry in the Far East ; The Acquisition of

the Government of Backward Territory in International Law ; The Law of Territorial Waters and Maritime Jurisdiction ; Sierra Leone in History and Tradition ; Anglo-Dutch Relations from the earliest times to the Death of William III ; The Ethnical Minorities in Transylvania ; The Angora Reforms ; The Soviet Moslem Republics in Central Asia ; Siam and her relation with Other Powers ; The Economic and Social Movements underlying Antagonisms in the Pacific ; The Work of the Greek Refugee Settlement Commission ; Thirty Years of American-Filipino Relations ; Report of the Commission on the closer Union of the Eastern and Central African Dependencies ; Some Aspects of the Experience of American Agricultural Producers in the Marketing of their Products ; The Railway Policy of South Africa ; Kuoming tang and the Future of the Chinese Revolution ; The Constitutional Law of Iraq ; The Future of Transport in Tropical Africa ; Problems of Equatorial Africa ; Prize Law during the World War ; The International Aspects of the Wheat Market ; The Third Biennial Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations ; The Economic Relations between Great Britain and the Argentine Republic ; The Position of the Far East and the Kyoto Conference ; Problems of Italian Syndicalism ; National Economic Policy in Germany since the Stabilisation ; The Present Position of Malta ; Financial Reconstruction for China ; Mineral Resources and the Effect on International

Relations ; The Problems of West African Liquor Traffic.

I attend as many as I can. But even now my mind is not really clear as to what caused the war and what I must do to prevent similar tragedies in the future.

I genuinely desire wisdom on this subject. My academic guides tell me that my conclusions must be on the basis of the facts, and they are always ready, through these agencies of libraries and study circles and institutes, to give me more and more facts. I am confronted with a mountain of facts. Indeed there is a literally illimitable mountain range of them. Ignorant as I am, at least I know this : that if I lived for hundreds of years and did nothing else, I could never make myself familiar with what they call " the facts of the situation ". If, in order to know whether I should accept Lord Beaverbrook's advice to destroy the League, I must explore completely the range of subjects about which I got odds and ends in the study circle and the institute, cover the whole history of all the minorities of Europe, the full story of the struggles of the Poles, Magyars, Croats, Serbians, Slovenes, Slovaks, Ukrainians, Ruthenians, Czechs, and a score more ; know the story of the religious and linguistic differences involved ; combine that with a knowledge of the rights and wrongs of our own claims throughout the world ; the facts of India and the differences and disputes there ; if I am to know all the facts in order to vote with knowledge, then

I shall never vote. But my wife and flapper daughters and our maid, who worry themselves not at all about these things, *will* vote.

I try to recall whether my education furnished me a compass or a chart for the navigation of these vast oceans of "facts"; and I cannot recall that it gave me any counsel at all. And inasmuch as the circles and the institutes throw at one, in a single week, lectures on the tribal conflicts of Arabia *and* the law of territorial waters, it would seem that all facts and any facts are relevant. The implication seems to be that unless you know all the facts you cannot be wise; and as it is plainly impossible for me (or for that matter anyone else) to know all the facts, I am very near to the conclusion that wisdom is impossible, and I may as well accept folly as my lot.

Can organised education do more for Mr. Smith than it seems to have done?

I am suggesting here that it can. But that is all that I am suggesting; not, be it noted, that we can discover any magic formula by which Mr. Smith's successors can be made quickly and completely wise; but that those successors can be better equipped by educational training than he has been, for the particular problem which confronts him; that in our educational method we have in some degree gone the wrong way about it, both in what we have tried to do and what we have not tried to do.

CHAPTER III

BUT DOES SMITH MATTER ?

He does. His notions of Nationalism, Patriotism, Religion, Morality, of what is important and what unimportant, what permissible and what not, determine the kind of world in which we live. He made the last war and will make the next by reason of that Nationalism by which he swears, and which has split Europe into warring states. But as he has changed the object of his loyalties and passions many times in the past, it is unlikely that we have seen the last change. Whether he changes to a worse or a better loyalty will depend upon the degree of his understanding of the basic processes of his society. That men should fight is perhaps part of our nature ; but what we fight about is part of our nurture, education, way of thought ; the way we see things.

IF we have not done all that we might have done in making certain outstanding social truths available for the multitude, it may be because so many of us still feel that really the opinion of the multitude on public policy simply does not matter ; that all the really important questions—war and peace, and such like—are settled for us by inner governing circles of financiers, diplomats, politicians, the representatives of powerful “ interests ” ; the modern equivalent of what our forefathers used to call “ the gentry.”

This belief in the unimportance of the ordinary man's opinion or feeling in the real governance of the world is all but universal. “ So little has the ordinary man to do with such things as the making

of war ", wrote someone the other day, " that we shall be in the midst of the next one before he even knows that it has begun. His opinion won't be asked and his opinion will make no difference. How can it, since we know that it will be entered upon without consulting him ? "

Yet the ordinary man will have made it, nevertheless, as he made the last, however little he may have intended so to do.

For that war arose, as the next will arise, from the fact that Europe is organised on a basis of national sovereign states. If Europe's development at some point of the past—at the break-up of the Western Empire say, or after the decline of Feudalism—had taken a turn in the direction of federalism, the limited sovereignty of each state under some common authority (as the history of the revolting American colonies of Britain took a turn towards federalism, while those of Spain did not), and the states of Europe were broadly what the states of the North American continent are—then the war of 1914 would not have taken place. One might put it in the form of a truism : If there were no nations, nations would not go to war. But the thing which gives us the intense national passions and animosities of Europe (not only in the Balkans), and which will make it extremely difficult for Europe to do consciously what has been done for the United States by the less conscious forces of history, is the " innate " feeling, the opinion of the ordinary man.

And that, parenthetically, answers the question which John Smith put to his twenty friends : What is the cause of war ? The cause of war is the existence, not of nations (Scotland and Wales are nations but their nationalism is not now, though it was once, a cause of war) ; nor of groups of men insisting upon being states (California and Massachusetts are states, and they are not causes of war) ; but of nations insisting upon sovereignty and independence ; nations refusing to be partners with other nations (since partnership limits the independence of the partners) ; deciding to live that is, without government, each a law unto himself. Of that more presently. The fact to be clear about for the moment is that it is because Europe is a Nationalist Europe in that sense, seething with the animosities and passions which accompany " absolute " nationalism, that it is a disintegrating and chaotic Europe ; and that Nationalism, with these connotations, is the most important factor, the most potent force, in European politics and economics to-day. On the reply to the question whether these forces can be so modified as to make the creation of a new sovereignty, a new loyalty possible, will depend the outcome of the efforts to end war.

How powerful is that factor, how much it enters not only into the political problems of Europe but into such economic problems as tariffs, the creation of a workable monetary system, the maldistribution of gold, the settlement of debts, the pages which

follow will attempt to show. The point which concerns us here is that the problem of modifying nationalism is a problem of modifying the attitude of the ordinary man. Nationalism was not made by capitalists, or financiers or other powerful interests (who would be better off and more powerful if Europe were politically like the United States), nor by diplomatists, though all may in some degree exploit Nationalism and though the idea may have been started as the emotions have certainly been fanned by historians, poets, and orators. In so far as the capitalists and statesmen do exploit it, they are able to do so just because the appeals to national prejudice, mistrust of foreigners, jingo passion, find readier response than do any other public appeals whatsoever. That is but one testimony the more to the power of this sentiment. Parenthetically, the only way of undermining the influence which the capitalists and others exercise by means of the sentiment, is by letting light into the mind of the exploitee; by making him aware of the nature of the motive which he is obeying; by civilising the emotion which sways him as we have managed to civilise certain other emotions which deeply stir him.

What seems to be happening now is, that the statesmen, while professing to adhere to the older popular conceptions, are abandoning them very much more than they dare admit. American statesmen, while professing to have kept America free from any "entanglement" with the outside world,

know of course that America is inevitably committed to indispensable co-operation in the work of the world to a degree which would simply horrify the Middle-Western Babbitt if he realised what was taking place.

Professor Toynbee recently wrote this :

I think we can fairly say that, in these last dozen years, we have made more progress towards overcoming the anarchy in the relations between states than our predecessors made during the previous four centuries.

If we are frank with ourselves, we shall admit that we are engaged on a deliberate and sustained and concentrated effort to impose limitations upon sovereignty and independence of the fifty or sixty local sovereign independent states which at present partition the habitable surface of the Earth and divide the political allegiance of Mankind. The surest sign, to my mind, that this ancient and blood-stained fetish of local national sovereignty is our intended victim is the emphasis with which all our statesmen and our publicists protest with one accord, and over and over again, at every step forward which we take, that, whatever changes we may make in the international situation, the sacred principle of local sovereignty will be maintained inviolable. This, I repeat, is a sure sign that, at each of these steps forward, the principle of local sovereignty is really being encroached upon, its sphere of action reduced and its power for evil restricted. It is just because we are really attacking the principle of local sovereignty that we keep on protesting our loyalty to it so loudly. The harder we press our attack upon the idol, the more pains we take to keep its priests and devotees in a fool's

paradise—lapped in a false sense of security which will inhibit them from taking up arms in their idol's defence.

Professor Gilbert Murray is led to a similar avowal : speaking of the pre-war world compared with present tendencies, he writes :

The world was divided among some fifty-odd sovereign independent States. They were all very proud of being sovereign and independent, which meant that each one had the right to do whatever it liked and owed no loyalty to any other nor yet to the whole. Each one had the right to make war at any moment on any other. They had been compared to a band of robbers, but the comparison is not apt. Robbers owe obedience to the chief and loyalty to one another. The sovereign independent States did not. They are like so many separate bands, each full of loyalties and good aims and friendships within itself, but owing no duties to one another. Enlightened and conscientious statesmen might, of course—and did—rise superior to the system ; but the system itself meant anarchy and a chronic state of fear. For the notion that conquest brought prosperity was still generally prevalent, and the strong were expected to make war upon the weak. Hence the need for alliances, and then for counter-alliances. . . .

Hence they formed the League, or Society, of Nations. We call it a "League", but the rest of Europe, more accurately, calls it a "Society". The essence of it is that the "Sovereign Independent State", in its full sense, has really disappeared. (No one dares to say so in public, but it is time they began.) ¹

Again and again this last ten years we have seen

¹ *Spectator*, May 9th, 1931.

governments desiring to do one thing, knowing that it is the best thing to do, and prevented by popular feeling from doing it.

Long since governments recognised that the sums demanded of Germany by the Allies and of the Allies by America could not be paid. But the governments had to go on asking for those sums, although by so doing the danger of the world slipping into economic chaos was greatly increased.

Listen to Mr. Lloyd George in the House of Commons, explaining why French Ministers had not, at the time the Treaty was signed, been able to settle the indemnity at a reasonable figure :

There was no Ministry in France at that moment which could have accepted any figure such as has been suggested. It is no use, if you are dealing with realities, not to take political realities into account. M. Clemenceau was one of the most courageous statesmen who ever presided over the destinies of France. He was not afraid of facing opposition in the Chamber ; but even he would have shrunk from going to the Chamber at the time and urging them to accept a figure which at present might be regarded as quite acceptable even by French statesmen. It was essential that you should give time to allow the passion, the temper, and the ferocity of war to subside, so that you could finally adjudicate in a calmer atmosphere the claims between the various parties.

We sometimes speak of the oppression of " the people " by individual despots, as though a single individual or a tiny group could, by their own

sinews, impose their will as against that of a whole nation, vast multitudes ; as though a junta of ten men could by physical prowess defy ten million or a hundred million. But plainly it is not in the last analysis by physical power, the sheer weight of bone and muscle of one man or ten, that scores of millions are dominated. That domination can only be achieved through things of the mind : first, it may be, by a co-operation of the governing group closer than that which the mass manage to achieve ; and then, it may be, by direct domination of the mind of the mass by control of the facts and ideas which reach it. But it is always the opinion, the mind, the will of the mass, which constitutes the constant factor of the situation. In the West indeed most dictators, new or old, are shameless demagogues : a Napoleon using military fanforanade ; a Mussolini, just that Nationalism we are discussing ; a Lenin, hatred of the bourgeoisie (represented in the case of the Russian peasant by fear of the landlord's return) ; while in the East ruler and ruled alike are usually in the grip of tradition, of opinion embodied in religious, caste or tribal rules. Of phenomena like the British government of India one can say this : First, it would never have been achieved, as Seeley has shown, save by the co-operation of the Indians themselves (India, he tells us, was conquered by Indian soldiers) ; and second, that the effect of British rule upon the character of Indian life has after two hundred years been immeasurably less than the influence of mass feeling

about such things as caste, the differences of Moslem and Hindu, the religious injunctions or traditions which make early marriage and fecundity obligatory. Not until it is possible to get at the Indian mind in such things as these, will either British or Indian, either a Clive or a Gandhi, achieve a real change ; and in so far as physical power enters, its use will be mainly to affect those things of the mind, opinion. And to what end that is done will itself depend upon a way of thought.

In speaking of men's "opinions" about things, about "public opinion", the word is usually taken as referring only to the sort of "opinion" which an hour's argument on inflation or Free Trade or Prohibition may affect. But that surely is an entirely arbitrary limitation. "Public opinion" applies as justly to the attitudes and feelings we associate with such things as Patriotism, Nationalism, religious conviction or prejudice, class or race hostilities and antagonisms.

The discussion as to whether public opinion in that sense matters is marked usually by a curious contradiction. There is a type of mind which scorns the idea that what John Smith thinks has the least bearing on public events, which insists that events are determined either by material—economic—forces, or by the influence of persons who have captured material power. A Marxian will be apt to assume that the economic interest of those concerned will outweigh every other consideration, and that the discussion of ideas by the multitude has

very little importance. (His own emphasis on the importance of propaganda is of course in contradiction with his cruder economic determinism.)

Yet, note the alternatives which confront Europe and the choice of them which the European is making : He can continue to maintain and raise national barriers (some ten thousand miles of *new* barriers have been created in the last fifteen years, and nearly all the old ones raised), in which case Europe's economic efficiency as compared to that, say, of the United States, will steadily decline ; he is bound to be poorer and the whole machine may become utterly unmanageable ; or, he can abandon " absolute " nationalism—that aspect which insists upon complete political and economic sovereignty—create machinery of international co-ordination and authority, and become very much richer. Which course is he, at present at least, pursuing ? He persistently pursues the course which makes him poorer, economically less effective. Can we say that " economic interest " determines his policy ? In so far as the economic motive enters, it is a mistaken view of economic interest. Which shows, once more, that men's ideas of what the facts are may determine conduct much more than the facts themselves.

In explaining the wreckage of capitalism by the war the economic determinist is apt to speak of capitalist avarice having overreached itself ; of the whole thing having been brought about our ears because the capitalist group of one nation was in

conflict with some rival national group ; which means that the capitalist class is not a unit, that it is crossed by nationalist divisions : that nationalist prepossessions thwart its economic impulse.

At that stage of the argument there is apt to enter the dogmatic assertion on the part of the determinist (now become a psychologic instead of an economic one) that these innate forces of group hostility and pugnacity are unalterable forces, part of ourselves, which we must accept because " we are what we are ". He admits, in other words, that John Smith certainly does matter, that his prejudices and passions are so little a negligible force that they are alike irresistible and unchangeable.

Yet plainly that is not so, for the thing we fight about is not the thing our fathers fought about. At present our one supreme cause of quarrel is Nationality. Political nationalism has become for the European of our age the most important thing in the world, more important than civilisation, humanity, decency, kindness, pity ; more important than life itself.

But yesterday we were (and in some places are still to-day) just as ferocious about other things : religion, caste, tribe, clan. For long men warred for their religion and recked little of nationality. But we have civilised relatively at least those other patriotisms.

Religion in the West is less accompanied by massacres and burnings than it used to be. We manage somehow to live with the heretic ; to give

him citizenship, the political and civil rights we claim for ourselves. We have altered our feeling about it. That men should fight is, if you will, part of our nature ; but what we fight about is part of our nurture, education, tradition, way of thought—an intellectual, not a physical, inheritance.

There is a further fact which concerns us in this connection : not only did the lay view on (say) theological questions matter a great deal to priesthood and to church (the layman's feeling was the basis of a church's power over its adherents), but when the change came it was largely imposed on the church by the laity.

It is true of course that economics entered very greatly into the old religious conflicts ; that the church itself was a great vested interest, affording livelihood to hundreds of thousands of persons who desired to defend the livelihood and their power as a class. But the element which made the wars and massacres possible was a public attitude which has changed ; the change is a change of idea. Against that change was pitted specialist knowledge and erudition. In so far as men sincerely sought guidance in that learning they found rather confusion. " Wisdom came from the great Simplicities." The immense achievement represented by the emergence of the principle of toleration was the work mainly of the unlearned layman. He came to feel that a lifetime's study of (say) this or that miracle was less important as relevant evidence than an hour's dispassionate consideration of the

question whether God would condemn a man to everlasting torment for hesitating to affirm belief in an alleged occurrence which intelligence and intellectual conscience suggests was extremely unlikely. It was not the very learned (and very sincere) inquisitor who saw most clearly the essential truth, but the less learned layman whom the inquisitor would have suppressed. Reform came not from erudition but from simplification, the clearing up of confusion.

Can we achieve for the mass of men in the field of politics some clarification, analogous to that achieved in the field of religion?

CHAPTER IV

CAN WE SIMPLIFY SMITH'S PROBLEM?

Smith cannot be governed by experts ; nor govern without them. He must know how to use them intelligently and to do that must know what he wants and something of the way in which society functions. Social science resembles medical science in this : prevention and prophylaxis, its methods, and processes, are quite within the layman's scope of knowledge, however much curative science may be beyond it. Many of the worst political difficulties of the world would have been avoided by observing almost self-evident social principles. By enabling John Smith to grasp and apply the simple principles which are not beyond his capacity, he may avoid the need of bothering with the curative complexities that are.

WHEN Mr. Smith, in the last chapter but one, recited the complexities which confronted him when he attempted to inform himself upon the questions of the day, he raised, of course, the fundamental paradox of democracy. Many of the questions which he mentions, such as Empire Free Trade—whether it is worth while taxing our foreign sources of raw material and other needed products in order to develop Empire sources and so a possible new trade—are ultimately questions of fact, of figures extremely difficult to determine ; requiring, if the answer is to be worth anything, not only specialist knowledge of economics but the habit of using statistics and a sense of the traps into which they may lead one. But in deciding these questions we do not turn to the specialist ; we put

it to the public as a whole, usually in the form of a disorderly, discursive discussion, carried on during a week or two's electoral jamboree. We leave it to the butcher, the baker and the candlestick-maker, who can only give, at best, a spare-time attention to the matter—a very spare-time attention—to decide these abstruse and difficult statistical and technical problems. It is much as though medical experts, baffled by the complexity of a problem like the cause and cure of cancer, doubtful as to the answers which should be given to certain riddles connected therewith, should say : “ Let us take a vote of the laboratory night-watchman, the janitor and the boy who brings the milk, and let them give the answer.”

It sounds March madness. And in one aspect it is. But also, it is inevitable, if for no other reason than that it is the fate of the butcher, the baker and candlestick-maker which is being decided. They are therefore entitled to have some say about it. That is why we cannot be ruled by experts. If the medical experts were about to operate upon the night-watchman for cancer, he would, naturally, have the casting vote. The final decision as to whether the operation should take place or not would not rest with the experts, but with the layman.

What is the first need revealed by this situation ? Most of our electoral reforms seem to imply that the first need is to get a mechanically perfect register of what the John and Jane Smiths of the

world actually now think about these things, even if those opinions are a hopeless jumble of misunderstood catchwords, prejudices, ill-digested "slogans", fallacies, illusions.

I suggest that we shall not save Democracy by concentrating attention upon the means by which error and fallacy can be faithfully translated into public policy ; that the first job is not to find out with mechanical exactness what the people think, but to place them in such relation to the problems which confront them that what they think has some chance of being right ; that the decisions they come to may as often as possible be true decisions.

To the solution of political and economic problems we make an approach which we should, usually, never dream of making in a medical problem. When we propose a referendum on such a matter as the taxation of foreign food we assume, presumably, either that the busy and harassed John Citizen or Jane Citizen, the tired labourer or the factory girl or typist, will work out the intricate statistics of the matter for him or herself ; or that in the decision of the charlady making her cross there enters some sort of magic which enables her to dispense with such things as statistics and facts.

The truth is that we have confused the question of the right to make the decision with the means of making it. The failure to supply the means makes the right a farce. Mayor Thompson of Chicago once argued a little plaintively that, after

all, he and his officials were the "choice of the people". That is to say, the Chicago voter is presented with a ballot on which at times there have been as many as 500 names—would-be judges, attorneys, accountants, engineers, school superintendents, park superintendents, sewage superintendents. . . . The voter is asked to decide whether Henry P. Jones, whom he has never seen, will make a better Keeper of the Court House Records than William P. Robinson, whom he has never seen, not knowing what a Keeper of Court House Records has to do. To sift the respective qualifications of the bearers of 500—or half a hundred—names would take a considerable office staff some months. The charlady who marks the ballot paper has to do it in two minutes on her way to work. By this strange right—and rite—she is persuaded that she is really and truly "free". If the scores of officials for whom she voted and of whose character and quality it was not possible for her to have the slightest knowledge, prove to be thugs and gunmen, well, did she not freely choose them in the exercise of her great birthright as the citizen of a free country? And can she not choose others—about whom she can in the nature of the case know exactly nothing at all—when the next 500 names are submitted to her?

But the Chicago performance is not really more comic than the spectacle of submitting to the omnibus vote of all the hurried and harried citizens problems of export and import and policies

depending for wise determination upon difficult and abstruse statistical data.

If this meant that before we can have a wise democracy the barber must be an economist, a currency expert, an authority on Indian politics, the effects of rationalisation, and on the meaning of the Coal Bill, then indeed democracy would be in a parlous state. But note that in Britain the voter does not have to decide upon the merits of judges and city accountants. Is democracy or popular control over municipal—or national—governments less effective in Britain than in America in consequence? It is more effective. And it is more effective precisely because the voter is not given an impossible task of detail which no ordinary citizen can accomplish as a mere spare-time interest.

But does not this suggest that what has been done for the selection of officials should be done for decision on policies like those involved in Protection and Free Trade, The League, disarmament, obligatory arbitration? If publics and governments accepted expert or educated opinion on tariff problems, 90 per cent. of the difficulties would disappear. But the expert economist is simply disregarded because the ordinary layman cannot understand the expert and thinks he knows better. Our education must aim more at enabling the citizen to be, not an expert in fifty subjects, but capable of using the expert's knowledge: it must aim, not at giving him the "facts" of every conceivable problem, but a technique, a skill by which

he can, first of all, become conscious of what the problem is—what it is he wants (which, generally, as we shall see, he seldom asks himself), a skill which will help him in pitching upon the essential issues, where experts differ, and why ; in deciding what facts are relevant ; and how he can use experts or specialists to give him the facts which he has not time to establish for himself.

Let us be clear on this point ; just why, that is, (a) we cannot have government by experts, and (b) must have it with the aid of experts.

When a year or two since the French franc stood at 250 to the pound and threatened to go the way of the German mark, a certain French peasant held forth to an English friend, who had made some study of monetary questions, somewhat in this wise :

Abolish the politicians and replace them by specialists properly paid to solve our problems, as the doctor or lawyer or engineer are paid. Take my case. Here is one gang of noisy politicians coming to me and saying that the franc is going to blazes because we did not annex the Rhineland, occupy Berlin, and repudiate the American debt. Another lot tell me that if we squeeze Germany any more or offend the Americans we shall all be in the soup. A third lot tells me we should float a big loan ; the fourth that a loan would be fatal. They ask me to say what I prefer ; to decide about inflation and deflation, bank reserves and cover ratios. It is all Greek to me. I want those who know about it to settle it for me by restoring the old pre-war franc,

so that we can see honest gold and silver once more and can fill our stockings with good écus or louis d'or in the old way. I want those who know how, to do that, and leave me in peace to work my farm. Why does not the government put up the problem to a man like yourself and let him solve it?

To which the Englishman replied :

I think I could tell you how the franc could once more become the old coin ; and yet the moment I started to do it you would be the first to stop me. For it could be done only in one of two ways : either by very much heavier taxation or by depriving your bonds of very nearly all their value. Immediately I began to tax you would howl. The other way, as I have hinted, is to let the value of the franc fall lower still, pay off the country's debts with that nearly worthless franc and then start afresh. It is pretty much what Germany has done. But immediately that was proposed you would remember that your *armoire à glace* is stuffed with Ville de Paris bonds and that the method would mean practical confiscation. Yet only along one road or the other—more taxation, or confiscation by means of making your money of still less value—could what you desire be done.

But it is not for me to say whether it is mainly the taxpayer or mainly the bondholder who is to pay, or in what proportions the burden should be divided between them. It is for those who pay the piper to call the tune.

Now, while it would always probably be beyond the capacity of the millions to follow the intricacies

of, say, a debate on the gold standard, it certainly is not beyond the capacity of the ordinary man, if his education dealt with that kind of subject and developed the right kind of skill, to see the issue between taxpayer and bondholder involved in the question of deflation or inflation.

Note how the intelligent layman uses the knowledge of the medical expert. A typical interview will run something like this :

Specialist. I think it is a case for operation. I see no tendency to spontaneous cure. The mischief is progressive. It might conceivably be arrested or even cured, but it is extremely unlikely. You must decide whether operation is the better risk.

Patient. But what do I know about it? How can I decide?

Specialist. Well, it is you we are going to cut up. I can only put the facts before you.

Patient. What proportion of patients would recover, without operation, where the disease has gone as far as it has with me?

Specialist. One per cent.

Patient. What is the mortality in these operations?

Specialist. In the case of good constitutions five per cent.

Patient. Putting the best constitution at a hundred, what figure would you give mine?

Specialist gives figures.

Patient. What about post-operative records?

Specialist quotes cases known to patient.

Patient. It looks like operating. I say "Yes".

Specialist. I think you have decided wisely. There

remains the question of the surgeon. X is the big man. His fee—when he can get it—is two hundred guineas.

Patient. I seem to remember that he is a "one-idea" man; thinks you can be cut up without limit. Also fashionable. Is that so?

Specialist (making qualified assent). They tell a story. After one of his operations the assistant said: "Which part do you take back to the patient's bed?"

Patient. I know nothing of surgery. But I know something of the tricks that "one idea" can play with one's sense of evidence. I've known Single Taxers and Currency Reformers. . . .

Specialist. Well, there's Y. He would do it for thirty guineas. He's younger. A bit uncouth. Not so fashionable.

Patient. Is it possible to get his record—whether any failures, and so on?

Specialist. As it happens, yes, because for certain special reasons I've watched his progress. I know his record pretty well, the subsequent history of most of his patients in this operation.

Patient. How does that compare with X's?

Specialist. Every bit as good.

Patient. We'll have Y.

Specialist. Again I think you have decided wisely. Most of my patients would have chosen the other man.

Here you have the final decisions taken by the layman in a highly technical and specialist matter, and, more than that, the layman choosing between experts. But note the process. The layman makes no attempt to "master the subject", to absorb pell-mell all the facts. Had he attempted to do

that, he would have been dead before he could have got very far ; and even if he had lived his merely spare-time attention to so technical a matter would have been as likely to land him in wrong conclusions as in right.

What he did was to apply a technique of interpretation of evidence, of facts furnished by others, a technique which ought to be the possession of every layman ; and he used it to avail himself of specialist knowledge. He does that first by being aware of his ignorance. He might have approached the matter, as laymen usually approach questions like Protection or currency reform—and even medical questions—with all the prepossessions of the missionary of some idea : “ anti-knife ” theories, or nature cure or some other strong conviction. In an earlier age he might have had strong convictions about “ interfering with God’s handiwork ”, and he would have approached the specialist with no real desire to know the facts at all : only to advance a theory. His desire to find health would have been crossed with his desire to vindicate personal views. But our layman knew what he wanted (he wanted health) ; he knew he was ignorant ; he knew he could not correct that ignorance by trying to swallow whole “ all the facts ” ; that he must go to others for certain conclusions to be drawn from the facts ; that in judging how far the conclusions were applicable to his own case he must use certain tests and tools (statistics in this case) ; that in the interpretation

of facts men are apt to fall into certain traps owing to temperamental twists of the mind ; that we must be on the look-out for these characteristics of human nature.

Now the technique of interpretation—the use of the other's knowledge—employed by this layman, is indispensable to all of us if we are to be guided by the facts in daily conduct at all. It is a universal need. We are not all called upon to make boilers or boots or fill teeth or navigate ships ; but we are all called upon, every hour of our lives almost, to draw conclusions from a new combination of facts. Yet we have not even a name for this science or technique. Not only is it not systematised in our schools ; not only do we not drill our youngsters in this grammar of truth, as we drill them (usually quite uselessly) in the grammar of speech ; not only do we not put them on their guard as to the temperamental traps which our natures lay for us when we come to interpret such facts as those which so appal Mr. John Smith, but, as we shall see later in these pages, the inmates of our schools and colleges are generally deliberately encouraged to overlook the traps, and pretend they are not there.

But the main point which it is the object of these pages to make can be illustrated by our experience with medicine and surgery in another way.

Our real debt to modern medicine is not in its cures ; it is on its preventive side, in prophylaxis. Not only does asepsis alone make modern surgery

possible, but if Black Deaths and decimating plagues are things of the past ; if the leper no longer shouts his dreadful warnings in our lanes ; if human life has been so prolonged as to bring about by that fact alone immense social and economic changes—if we owe all that to medicine, it is not because it has found cures. It is mainly due to the discovery of one governing principle in the causation of a whole range of diseases : transmission of disease by micro-organisms. With that one key, innumerable closed doors have been unlocked. Upon the understanding of that simple fact has been built a whole science of social hygiene, and nineteen-twentieths of the treasured lore of centuries which preceded it has simply been thrown into the dustbin. For generation upon generation learned men in medicine went badly astray ; they pinned their faith to such cure-alls as bleeding ; or to cures which seem to the modern physician childish superstition ; with all their learning they misread evidence (unless the modern doctor in not bleeding for four diseases out of five is wrong). Perhaps they misread evidence because of the learning ; because their attention was drawn away from the vital and simple fact by all the strange data of semi-superstition. The truth, which was to save a universe of unnumbered multitudes, was very near the surface for thousands of years ; was indeed visible and accepted in the case of the contagious diseases. (As early as the fifteenth century a surgeon whose cases were never gangrenous allowed it to be known

that "he boiled his tools". Tea in China arose out of the habit of boiling water during cholera epidemics.) If the full meaning of this had been grasped in the days of the plagues and the Black Deaths, man would have possessed a piece of knowledge of more value than all the lore in all the learned books of the doctors. Yet it is a truth so simple that its essence can be explained to a child in a quarter of an hour. Indeed its utility lies largely in its simplicity, since it is its ready adoption by the layman—the lay authorities responsible for sanitation and public cleanliness—that makes it valuable. If the layman could not be convinced ; if he simply could not be brought to understand the relation between unpolluted water and freedom from disease (as certain Eastern peoples whose minds are bemused with what might be called "the wicked spirits theory" of disease cannot be brought to understand), then medical science would be helpless. It is a very simple thing, quite within the comprehension of the layman, which, in one of the most specialised of all sciences, has done most for mankind.

I am suggesting that the political and social diseases of man are in somewhat like case. Once get the disease—an unworkable treaty based upon some false theory of "sole guilt", one-sided disarmament, bad frontiers, minority resentments, economic nationalism, outrageously silly reparations claims, debts, tariffs, conflicting alliance commitments, armaments—and you do indeed need

specialist knowledge, utterly baffling to the layman. (And the layman in his ignorance, of course, usually presents the specialist with a perfectly insoluble problem such as the payment of huge German reparations without huge German exports; a system of disarmament which shall leave everybody stronger than anybody else, and so forth.) But, and this is the point of the analogy, we get these diseases by the disregard of rules of political health which are simple enough for the least instructed layman to understand. The knowledge, for instance, which, if applied, would have prevented us making bad treaties, is not specialist knowledge at all. The proof of that is to be found in the fact that now in 1931 everybody—almost literally all the laymen, journalist and others, everyone who discusses the subject—is voicing the opinion that the Treaty must be revised, and declaring that France is silly and malicious for not seeing it. Is this new opinion, now voiced by those who held an exactly contrary opinion in 1919, due to the emergence of new facts, new knowledge, not then available? The facts, which are those of common experience interpreted by common sense, were just as available then as now. But we did not avail ourselves of them then for reasons with which I shall deal at greater length in a moment. The outstanding truth remains that most of these difficulties would never have arisen if the full import of certain simple truths, often self-evident (unless obscured by prejudice and prepossession), in almost

all cases available to ordinary intelligence, were fully seen and acted upon. The knowledge which, if used, would enable us to avoid the disease is simple, available to all. The knowledge necessary to cure the disease once we've got it, is vast, complex, difficult, uncertain ; beyond Mr. John Smith ; perhaps beyond anyone.

Concede, if you will, that the simple and understandable truths by which we benefit (like the microbic theory of disease) could never have been revealed save by the laborious and lifelong studies of specialists, the analogy I am pointing remains valid. A Koch may take twenty years to discover a bacillus. The discovery can be explained and demonstrated in twenty minutes. And it is precisely that aspect, explainable in twenty minutes, which has the most importance for the layman : not detailed histories of the long by-paths through which the pioneer has been obliged to travel in those twenty years before finally making his discovery.

Yet when organised education is confronted with the problem of enabling the John Smiths most easily to maintain a socially healthy world, it is not upon the elements of social hygiene that most stress is laid. John Smith's description of the kind of reading he was instructed to enter upon, shows that what his teacher deems important is a knowledge of odd details of particular diseases : the minutiae of some long dynastic quarrel ; the history of this or that particular international intrigue. No lay-

man could ever know all those facts ; a knowledge of millions of them would not necessarily put him on the road to the means of improvement. The simple thing, which he could understand with relative ease, representing the social equivalent to an explanation of the principles of modern hygiene based upon the microbic theory of disease, is not given. Any clear notion of that basic mechanism by which alone any society can function, is withheld in favour of odds and ends chosen from the long list of difficulties and disasters that mark our past.

The outcome is confusion in which the self-evident becomes obscure.

The next chapter attempts to show the way in which we are led to lose sight of the self-evident ; some of the results of so doing ; and the following one attempts to indicate one of the principles of social hygiene obviously necessary for political health, simple to understand, yet so far all but completely ignored in the policies which we formulate.

CHAPTER V

WHY ARE THE VISIBLE ASSASSINS UNPERCEIVED ?

The facts which really test a theory are sometimes the last which the learned see ; and which sometimes the unlearned see more quickly. Examples of the fashion in which for century upon century students missed the one fact which was most relevant to their problem and at the same time the most self-evident or most easily ascertainable. How certain rudimentary confusions of symbols with the things they stand for at times make decent men murderous and astute men destroyers of their own wealth.

THERE seems at first glance something outrageous, against common sense, in the suggestion that truths which have defeated the labours during hundreds of years of patient and learned men, should at last be uncovered by unlearned folk, with little of that labour, and none of that learning. It offends, moreover, the innate Puritanism of some of us, who feel that only by much labour of learning can the truth be conquered.

It is not suggested that either learning or labour is unnecessary ; but that the labour must be at the right place and the learning directed to the right ends. It is certain that the mere accumulation of " knowledge " in the sense of learning facts, is no more wisdom than a train-load of bricks is a habitable house ; and that merely to go on

cluttering the ground with bricks if one has no notion of how to build the house, or whether even one wants a house, is not the way to secure shelter for mankind.

From the history of that particular superstition of witchcraft, which has already been touched upon, one may take a useful illustration of the way in which the self-evident is obscured by erudition.

For many centuries men went in deadly fear of witches, and sought in the science of their day evidence of the reality of the powers ascribed to these beings. Generation after generation of students of the subject devoted their lives to the study of the evidence ; the literature of it became enormous. The bibliography, even of the fraction which remains to-day, runs into thousands of pages of small print. Yet the most pertinent evidence is not to be found in those libraries at all ; it was beneath the noses of the judges practically every time a witch was tried, was as available to every unlettered peasant as to the most learned lawyer, and is in fact the evidence on the strength of which later generations managed to throw off these fears and by which certain earlier generations managed to avoid them.

Witches would be put on trial for possessing means of striking dead those whom they did not like ; of becoming invisible ; of passing through keyholes and stone walls. The accused person would thereupon be locked in stone prisons, possessing keyholes, and would be subjected to long trials

and tortures, by persons whom she had every reason to dislike. Such evidence as might have thrown light on the accusation was the evidence, beyond challenge, beneath the noses of the judges, easily available, evidence which with years of painful plodding they did not find in their Latin tomes.

Something similar is to be found in the Mercantilist and Bullionist theories that dominated the economic policies of states for a hundred years, still dominates most popular thinking, and still affects monetary policy to-day. The theory was: A nation is rich to the degree that it secures gold and silver; the object of sound policy should be to get rid of goods and get gold. Government action was directed almost solely to the accumulation of "treasure"; ferocious penalties were imposed for sending gold abroad. Yet it is a truism that unless ultimately, as the result of its foreign trade, a country receives an addition to its actual goods, consumable goods or useful services, it has received no addition to its wealth: if its goods continue to go out and no goods come back in return it must get steadily poorer. Imagine a country, or a community really poor, really without goods, that is, like the Parisians during the siege of 1870-1. They needed bread, meat, milk, fuel, clothing. Would it have fed or warmed or clothed Paris to have poured in gold—and never let it go out? The bank was gorged with gold. To have given every inhabitant a sack of gold would not have

helped in the slightest degree ; Paris would have continued to starve and freeze to death.

Economists commonly explain this error as a confusion between the individual and the community. But if the Mercantilists were thinking of the nation as a person they applied the analogy most imperfectly : tell a person that he may accumulate money but never on any account spend a penny of it, and you have condemned him to death. Money only becomes real wealth when it is spent. It bears about the same relation to wealth that the deeds of a house do to a house. You cannot solve the housing problem by distributing deeds of houses among the houseless population. And although the quantity of money available for trade is an important economic problem, it does not help its solution in the least to part company with reality and defy the self-evident as the old Mercantilists did, and some modern Mercantilists still do. Ingenious defences are at times made for the old Mercantilists, but it suffices to read their books to see that they missed the completely self-evident fact that if from first to last no goods are added to a nation's store you have not made it richer. Incidentally that modern variant of Bullionism which prompts a nation to create a maldistribution of monetary gold by disproportionate reserves, thus bringing the whole monetary system (and with it themselves) to ruin, is hardly wiser than the old form. The point is that the truth which would have prevented the old Mer-

cantilists from falling into that error which lasted centuries, did not need for its recognition the analysis of elaborate statistics, a huge accumulation of data ; it needed a keener eye for one dominant self-evident fact.¹

Certain points of these two illustrations may perhaps be clarified by another of a different nature :

A visitor to Monte Carlo relates :

I was standing by a gambling-table when an individual of somewhat shabby aspect touched me on the elbow, and beckoned me aside. He explained that he had a system by which, with a very small capital, I could win a million francs. He had the arithmetical proof in the documents he showed me. Now, I knew that if I entered into a discussion of his elaborate tables of figures, I should be lost ; for his calculations dealt with such things as the law of averages and of probability, about which philosophers have quarrelled since the beginning of time. I should be quite incapable of the necessary analysis. But I did not need to examine the elaborate arithmetical calculations. The value of the system was settled for me by one fact. This fact : It was for sale for one hundred francs. I informed him that in view of that fact I was not interested in his figures.

The essential fact is visible enough, but very many clever people miss it, as witness the never-failing vogue of tipsters, newspaper and others.

¹ See the author's *Story of Money* (Chap. VII) for detailed evidence of past and present opinion on this subject.

Take an instance in present-day politics. Here is an election in progress. One of the candidates is a famous athlete and airman ; his record will give him a great advantage. Another is popular for his charities or the social qualities of his wife ; another says quite seriously, " It will greatly help if my horse wins the Grand National " ; still another is greatly helped because her career as a variety actress makes her a great draw at meetings. It is notorious that such considerations have influence with many thousands of voters. Now many of the facts upon which one has to base political opinions are difficult to determine and extremely doubtful. But in such cases as those cited, there is at least one unmistakable fact, plain to every elector if he stops to look at it : The fact that the capacity to fly in aeroplanes, possess fast race-horses or ornament the variety stage are not qualifications for dealing with questions of unemployment, or monetary policy, or housing, or foreign policy. That one fact which is within the knowledge of all, is the one fact which again and again, sometimes in hours of great crisis, tens of thousands of electors will completely disregard. Their decisions as rulers of the society of which they are a part, as masters of the nation's policy, are repeatedly determined by likes, dislikes, sympathies, antipathies which have not the remotest bearing on the questions which they are deciding.

Take another case, referred to incidentally in

the previous chapter. If we had to-day, in 1931, to make the Treaty of Versailles, we all know perfectly well that it would not resemble at all the Treaty which we actually made in 1919. Indeed almost everyone is now pressing the need of revision and the wickedness of France in standing in the way thereof. Organs as Conservative as *The Times* urge that view to-day. Why did we urge a contrary view thirteen years ago? Were not the facts upon which we now form our opinion then available? They were just as available then for those who had eyes to see them as they are to-day. For popular opinion, which has so greatly changed in the past few years, takes no slightest account of all the erudition expended upon the elaborate diplomatic manœuvring, the priority of this or that act of mobilisation, Germany's guilt or guiltlessness. The Blue Books have not been examined, the voluminous histories have not been read. What decides opinion to-day are certain broad truths which would have been as visible at the time of the Treaty-making but for the emotional tumult which then obscured them: the simple truth, for example, that Germans are not savages to be restrained permanently by force, as we then pretended—or by some process of self-deception honestly believed them to be—but a civilised people to be treated as the equal, in civilisation or in the reliability of their bond, of other Western peoples, and that any policy which denies this broad truth is a defiance of common sense and is bound to fail. Our millions accept that to-day

as a patent and obvious fact ; they defied or ignored that patent and obvious fact a few years ago.

Take another case. For twelve years the settlement of Europe has been held up by the difficulties arising out of Reparations and War Debts. As I write these lines the world is holding its breath watching to see whether Germany will, as the result of these difficulties, slip over into chaos. Already banks have closed, travellers are stranded, ships are laid up, food is becoming scarce, workmen cannot get their wages. A little more, and Germany may travel the Moscow road. The non-German world cannot be indifferent to that, for Germany owes the world great sums, and that world is not in the condition to stand the failure of more debtors.

Yet the whole difficulty has arisen because the public would not face the self-evident, and would not, ten years ago, decide which of two irreconcilable things they desired. They asked for vast sums from Germany. They also demanded that German exports should not increase, and went on for years ignoring the fact that these two demands could not be reconciled. Yet it is quite self-evident. All the gold Germany possessed would only pay a tiny fraction of the sums demanded. What remained ? Paper money ? It is no use to anyone, except in Germany for the purpose of buying German goods. To pay Reparations she must sell goods abroad ; greatly expand her foreign trade. And that, the Allies kept on declaring, we

shall not permit ; we shall put up tariffs to prevent it. Yet a child could work it out in his own mind, without having read one line of academic economics, that since gold could only pay a fraction, and since German paper money is of no value abroad, the only other means of payment was goods and services. He could also work it out in his own mind that if goods are excluded a country gets nothing. If within the area in which we live nothing that we can eat, wear, use, amuse ourselves with, shall be permitted to enter, then we shall not have enriched ourselves with anything that can be eaten, worn, used. If nothing comes in, nothing comes in ; and we are no richer. That complete truism, really self-evident, is beyond the plain blunt man. Members of Parliament (among others) at the time of the Treaty-making kept on saying, "Germany shall pay, but she shall send us no goods nor export any to compete with ours." The Americans are in exactly similar case over the debts. They say, "Europe shall pay ; we know they cannot send us more gold ; we know their paper money is no use here, but if they send more goods we shall increase our tariff to prevent it. But they shall pay." (The Germans have a proverb : You may wash me, but you must not make me wet.)

A few wiser journalists and authors, even at the time, exploded in exasperation. Thus Mr. J. A. Spender :

Is it really necessary that the whole world should be kept in suspense and its trade paralysed by maintaining

vast claims which all instructed men know cannot be met, and, if they could be met, would be rejected by the claimants? Must we go on, year after year, verifying from costly experience what has now become self-evident? There was some excuse for ignorance in 1919. The idea of vast payments being made from one nation to others was a new one to the modern world, and the small sum exacted from France after the Franco-German war offered no analogies.

American economists (Professors Bass and Moulton, of the University of Chicago), in their book on *America and the Balance Sheet of Europe* (p. 335), write :

What hope is there for the world so long as Premiers of Allied countries admit that Germany can pay only with goods which none of the Allied nations are willing to receive, and give support to their Parliaments in framing tariff measures designed to prevent German exports, at the same time insisting that recalcitrant Germany must meet the Reparation obligation to the last farthing and the last sou? What hope is there for the world so long as most of the leading students of international finance and economics, who recognise the fundamental illusion in reparations and Allied debts, will frankly discuss the subject only in the undertones and in inner offices? What hope is there for the world when statesmen and financiers alike, while lacking the courage to tell the truth about reparations and inter-allied debts, insist that nothing can be done as a practical matter, "however desirable it might be from an economic point of view", because the people will not be satisfied to give up the supposed advantages of reparations and

debts payments? If ever there was a time for leadership in a campaign of enlightenment on the fundamentals of international economics, it is now. If ever there was a time when the truth is needed to set men free, it is now. If ever there was a time when evasion and concealment were political virtues, it is *not* now.

The reader will probably exclaim: "The man talks like an eighteenth-century intellectualist, with his assumption that 'reason' can overcome the fierce passions that have blazed in Europe these hundred years; and that his 'half-hour lessons before breakfast' can dam such emotional Niagaras as these. After all that the Allies had suffered for four years it was not in human nature that they should come to the peace table in a mood of cool and calm calculation."

There is no question of "reason overcoming emotion". When we realise that the compass must determine the ship's course, we have not in mind any such notion as that the tiny force which swings its needle will overcome the power of the ship's engines. The repetition of an illustration may be permitted. I see across the street the enemy who has wronged me these twenty years; I feel hate and murder. Reason will have no effect. Yet the next moment reason, pure intellectualism, dispels my hate. For I see, that, since this man has all his fingers and my enemy had one missing, it must be a case of mistaken identity. Pure intellectualism; but my hate is immediately dissipated; dissipated without any moral change in me, with

no great efforts toward emotional discipline : a simple perception has altered my view of the facts. That perception did not require erudition, but it did require the avoidance of wrong erudition. An erudite man of an earlier age might have begun to think of the possibility of witchcraft in the restoration of fingers, and plain fact would have been obscured.

The proposition that passion, fear or hate must always act upon one particular interpretation of the facts instead of upon another, is itself a disregard of knowledge at everyone's disposal. Occurrences or phenomena which threw the savage or the man of the fourteenth century into panic fears and made him kill unpopular members of the community or burn witches, leave the ordinary man of the twentieth century indifferent. "Human nature" did not manifest itself in Aristotelean Athens in the same way in which it did in the Stone Age community which lived upon the same soil a few centuries earlier. It was not a biological change which accounted for the difference ; it was not the result of a long accretion through many generations of what we should to-day call scientific knowledge ; it was a changed intellectual method, a different way of thought, which a little group of men discovered and the secret of which their successors for a long time lost. This fact, that one age may possess an aptitude and succeeding generations lose it, is proof that the blindness of which we are speaking is neither inevitable nor incurable ; that the

degree to which the rational side can correct or discipline the impulsive and the instinctive is a matter of acquired habits or skills, a trick to be learned. To talk of "unchanging human nature", in the sense of implying that primeval instincts and impulses must always dominate reason in the precise way that they have done in the past, must necessarily defeat our efforts to make human society decently humane and workable, is itself a misreading of common knowledge or a defiance of it. We are still superstitious enough, heaven knows; and necromancers and sorcerers and betting tipsters still ply a profitable trade: but the daily and hourly dread of witches, the hysteria which turned whole communities into fear-ridden barbarians, killing and burning wretched women by the tens of thousands, that at least has gone, as the worst ferocities of the religious wars, massacres, inquisitions have gone. We have banished them by a better use of the facts that all can see.

I do not in the least deny the naturalness, the inevitability of the passions which led us astray in 1919, granted certain conceptions which were and are current. But I deny that those conceptions, by means of which alone these particular passions could be aroused and manifested in that way, were inevitable. Those passions of 1919 which blinded us to plain fact and gave us unworkable treaties which now curse our peace, would never have arisen in the form and with the intensity with which they did arise, but for a process of unconscious but

amazingly savage make-believe, of turning symbols, abstractions of the mind, into tangible things ; into actual persons of flesh and blood. Let us note the nature of this particular defiance of fact.

We are obliged at times, for certain practical purposes, to treat a state as a juridical and political "person", as we treat the London and North Eastern Railway, the Church of England, or the Amalgamated Union of Electrical Engineers at times as a juridical person. But in the case of nations we slip into making the symbol in our minds a physical person with a single will, to talking of "France's" feelings, "her" susceptibilities, "Germany's" crime, "Germany's" word and the need for punishing "her".

With results like this : Helpless lads with no arms in their hands are butchered like vermin, by men incapable of inhumanity to others of their own nation, because "Germany" bombed a town, or sunk a hospital ship. Were these butchered lads, a year or two from school, responsible for the sinking of the ship or the bombing of the undefended town ? ¹ Yet men of deep culture, wide learning

¹ The author of *Generals Die in Bed* (Charles Y. Harrison, published by Noel Douglas) describes how on the eve of an action the soldiers were instructed to take no prisoners as reprisal for the sinking of a hospital ship. It turned out later that the ship was a munition-carrier. The author describes how the instructions were carried out :

"There are hundreds of them. They are unarmed. They open their mouths wide as though they are shouting something of great importance. The rifle fire drowns out their words. Doubtless they are asking for mercy. We do not heed. We are avenging the sinking of the hospital ship. We continue to fire.

and high character, applaud the act as a just punishment, and quote Tacitus to prove that the "German" was always cruel, vindictive, barbarous.¹ Whatever "Germany" might have done, whatever "her" crime, those boys had not sunk that ship; had no responsibility for it.

(Incidentally we had been preaching that we were fighting Germany because "she" was not democratic, and the people did not control the Government.)

For that passion of murderous retaliation to rise at all, those who felt it had to part company

"Everything is indistinct in the smoke, it is not easy to pick them off.

"They are nearly on top of us. There is a look of amazement on the faces as we shoot. We are firing point blank now.

"The grey figures continue to fall, one by one, until only a handful is left.

"They realise they are doomed and they scream. We can hear them now above the rifle-fire, we are so close.

"*Bitte—bitte* (please—please)."

"Their voices are shrill. They are mostly youngsters.

"They throw themselves into the crater of a shell-hole. They cower there. Some of our men walk to the lip of the hole, hands are held up from out of the funnel-shaped grave. The hands shake eloquently, asking for pity. There is none. Our men shoot into the crater. In a few seconds only a squirming mass is left. As I pass the hole I see the lips of a few moving. I turn away."

¹ Mr. Hartley Manners the playwright makes his contribution to wartime literature in his description of "the German":

... "a slave from birth, with no rights as a free man, owing allegiance to a militaristic Government to whom he looks for his very life; crushed by taxation to keep up the military machine; ill-nourished, ignorant, prone to crime in greater measure than the peasants of any other country—as the German statistics of crime show—a degraded present, a wretched future, and a loathsome past—these are the inheritances to which the German peasant is born. What type of nature can develop in such conditions? But one—the *Brute*. And the four years' commerce of this War has shown the German from prince to peasant as offspring from the one family—the *brute* family" . . . (From *Hate with a Will to Victory*.)

with plain fact, to create an arbitrary collectivity that should also have a personality, each member conscious of and responsible for the action of the whole. So completely imaginary are these entities that we can alter and modify them instantly at will.

"I want my daughter to marry an American ; these foreigners are so unreliable," says the patriotic American materfamilias. The collectivity for her is the "foreigner" on the one side and the "American" on the other. She has a picture in her mind of the "foreigner" (he has a beard) and of the "American". She likes the latter and dislikes the former. But the very next instant her mind makes an entirely different collectivity for the grouping of her preferences. One finds that there are some Americans—negroes for instance—who are plainly far more "foreign" to her than foreigners. Better, it would seem, that her daughter should marry a German than that she should marry an American who was not white, Protestant, free from radical views, and free from any taint of Jewish or Wop descent. At one moment she was passionately defending "Americans" as against "foreigners" or as against "Germans" ; the next moment it was plain that she hated Americans who were negroes, radicals, Catholics or Jews more than she hated the "foreigner".

The well-intentioned, horrified at the moral and material outcome of this way of thought, protest. But so often the protest takes a form which accepts the intellectual validity of this image-making. We

are urged to forgive "Germany"; or be patient with "her"; to pity "her". This does not touch the root of the trouble, which lies in our thinking of Germany as "her" at all, whether good or bad, in parting company with reality, in dealing with abstractions as though they were tangible things. "Don't you loathe Germans?" came the question once during that time, to which the reply was: "Don't you loathe people who live in odd-numbered houses?"

That these "uncontrollable" passions, "inherent in our nature", are dependent upon the way in which we see the facts, was illustrated during the war by an octogenarian Frenchman, whose notion of European geography ante-dated the German union. He was upbraided for permitting his granddaughter to marry a German. "I tell you", the octogenarian insisted, "that he is not a Boche. He is a Bavarian. Never would I permit my granddaughter to marry a Prussian." Had his political geography been of a somewhat later date he would have found his Bavarian grandson-in-law hateful, would have conceived for him "uncontrollable" patriotic antipathy. His passions were forces put in motion by his way of thought on European geography.

If the punitive element of the Treaty defeats finally the aims alike of justice, our own security, appeasement and disarmament, and sets up moral forces that will render our new world even more ferociously cruel and hopeless than the old, it will

not be because the Treaty-makers were ignorant of the fact that "Germany", or "Austria," or "Russia", is not a person that can be held responsible and punished in this simple fashion. It did not require an expert knowledge of economics to realise that a ruined Germany could not pay vast indemnities.

The damage which that image-making I have spoken of above has done as a factor in the promotion of tribal and national animosities is fairly well recognised. But the part it plays in the creation of those economic fallacies, which, quite as much as its more specifically moral problems, jeopardise the fabric of Western civilisation, is much less generally recognised. Yet without that phantom-making and the disregard of the self-evident it involves, the *economic* nationalism which threatens us with chaos would never have arisen at all.

For, it arises, and can only arise, when we get a certain conception of what constitutes the economic entity, what constitutes "us", and what the "other". We speak of the competition of "Germany's" or "Belgium's" trade. But the man in Manchester does not speak of the competition of Kent's trade or Lincolnshire's trade. Yet he would, if those counties, by the development of home rule, were turned into independent states, as Ireland was turned into an independent state and Scotland may be. The Protectionist of to-day talks bitterly of the inroads of "America's"

or "Czechoslovakia's" competition. If Mr. Cunninghame Graham's efforts are successful and Scotland becomes a nation, in the sense that Ireland has become a nation, Scotland will, of course, demand the right to put up a tariff along her political frontier, and we shall then hear a great deal of the necessity for Scotland to keep out English competition. We should know nothing of Protectionism in Europe were it not for the division of Europe into these national corporate bodies.

The American manufacturer in Massachusetts will assert heatedly the need for protecting his workers against the cheap labour of Belgium or Britain ; but it does not occur to him to think of protecting them against the cheap labour of South Carolina. But he would demand Protection from South Carolina as a matter of course if the American colonies which are now the United States had, like the American colonies of Spain, developed into separate nations. The American manufacturer would have to deal with exactly the same men and women turning out exactly the same goods, as he does at the present moment ; but if the Carolinas or Louisiana were a nation, as might so easily have been the case if the history of North America had followed the line of that of South America, he would talk alarmingly of the competition of Louisiana—as alarmingly as we talk of that of Belgium or Czechoslovakia or Germany.

But does not that mean that the economic competition and struggle, with all its menace of

disintegration, chaos, war, is the outcome of a habit of thought which insists upon treating one kind of group—the nation, which no one yet has been able to define—as different *for economic purposes* from other political, racial or administrative divisions? If we thought of nations as we think of counties or urban administrative divisions we should not have this curse of economic nationalism. Yet counties have a certain corporate quality. The Cornishman differs from the Yorkshireman, both are proud of what they would consider their separate and distinct quality. Presumably they too are “corporate persons”. But the symbol does not mean the same in our minds as it does in the case of nations. The economic competition is created by a way of thought, *not* by material facts. Until we make these images in our minds it does not occur to us that competition exists. Before the war certain French industries of the northern departments carried on a great campaign against the competition of the Alsatian mills. Alsace was annexed. The same goods, produced by the same mills and the same workpeople, still come into competition with the same northern departments ; but now not a word is said. Exactly the same economic competition remains, but the French have now no sense apparently of its existence. The sense of economic rivalry depended upon the political frontier.

We speak of British or American or German trade. What is the nature of international trade?

An Argentinian sells corned beef to Germany, and with the money so obtained, buys cutlery in Sheffield, the money so produced being used to import petrol from America, the shareholder of the oil stock so benefited buying a dress in Paris. Is that Argentinian, German, British or French trade? The simple fact is that the national entity does not enter into nineteen-twentieths of these operations.¹ There is no commercial body or

¹ Mr. Raymond Fosdick puts it thus :

"In 1920, when the ruin of Central Europe had condemned to unemployment the greater part of English and German spinning mills, approximately one-third of our cotton area in the Southern States was abandoned. In consequence there began a migration of negro labour to our northern cities. The resulting racial difficulties which plagued us in those years and which will plague us again are problems that arose, not from anything that we did, but because the purchasing power of people three thousand miles away was temporarily reduced. . . .

"French savings, through the channel of a loan to Argentina or Chile, contribute to the development of German or Belgian industry. Prosperity in Czechoslovakia, by increasing the consumption of the plantations of Venezuela, affects the latter country. The fact that you drink two cups of coffee for breakfast instead of one has its reflex in some labourer's home in Brazil.

"Over a period of years a hundred thousand new colonists settled in Manitoba. Their purchases of English cloth stimulated the mills in Bradford, England, resulting in an increased demand for raw wool. This in turn involved the creation of new sheep farms in South Africa and Australia. The newly settled farmers on these sheep farms purchased automobiles, cotton goods and building materials through the New York market. In this roundabout fashion it was the money earned by the settler in Manitoba when he sold his wheat that bought the groceries and paid the rent of the American working man.

"An English ship stops at the port of Fiume for a load of Serbian, Hungarian or Roumanian emigrants. It lands them at Buenos Aires, and takes back to Trieste the raw wool of Argentina to the spinning mills of Austria and Bohemia. A German ship leaves Hamburg with a cargo of cloth from Saxony. At Antwerp it takes on some Belgian calico. At Havre it adds perfumes and silk goods from Paris. All this cargo it discharges at the port of New York, where it loads Canadian wheat for

limited liability company known as John Bull and Company. For some obscure reason it gives us pleasure to think in terms of these phantasies, but John Bull Limited never trades with Jonathan Incorporated or any other national corporation. The trade which goes on is made up of a mass of independent operations across frontiers. The term "international" indeed is incorrect. It should be described more correctly as trans-national. In so far as there is rivalry of interest that rivalry does not in fact embody itself in groups which coincide with the political frontiers.

I am not dealing with absolutes. It is true that in certain respects, the political entity is also the economic entity, that in some respects the political organisation must also be the economic organisation : in taxation, in monetary and banking matters, in the establishment and protection of property rights, in copyright and patent laws, in industrial protective legislation, in the fixing of minimum wages, in the provision of health and unemployment insurance and old age pensions. It is true that all these constitute very important

France, while its mail pouches contain drafts on Berlin, forwarded by Galician emigrants, which will serve to pay for the purchases of Russia on the Austrian market.

"Meanwhile the ports on the world's seaboard continue to grow. Each time a dock is built at Monte Video it is necessary to add a dock at London and at Hamburg. One nation extends its agricultural hinterland while the other increases its hinterland of factories. One nation lends its capital (we Americans have twenty billion dollars in private investments overseas) and the recipient nations in return increase their imports and add to their equipment. From year to year the rhythm accelerates."

economic functions that attach to the political unit. But these considerations, considered more carefully later, do not invalidate the general proposition, that in so far as the sense of being rival economic units attaches mischievously and usually so erroneously to the political entity it does so because we have made of the nation a person, an effigy, in the way I have described. And that would never have occurred but for a series of conceptions which in their turn are due to the ease with which we can disregard the plain facts of the external world.

CHAPTER VI

THE SOVEREIGN ASSASSIN

John Smith, who knows that the method of having no government or social institutions would not work within the state, insists that it is the natural and feasible method as between nations. He is unaware that he is applying the method of anarchy in the international field because his education has failed to familiarise him with the fact that society must have a mechanism. Moreover, his education, through the nursing of nationalism, intensifies his anarchic attitude.

NOTE certain aspects of an analogy drawn in a previous chapter. The greatest progress in the elimination of disease has been by a means that necessitated the co-operation of the public and medical authorities. That co-operation and its tremendous results in the practical ending in the West of "Black Deaths", plagues, leprosy, could never have been secured unless the public itself had gained some understanding of the reasons for the measures by which the end was achieved. That understanding could never have been gained if it had depended upon the ordinary man absorbing any considerable proportion of the "learning" scattered through two or three thousand years of medical literature, or indeed any considerable proportion of the knowledge which constitutes the scientific equipment of a modern doctor : anatomy, physiology, pathology, therapy. Any attempt

to compel the ordinary school child to cover all that ground would result merely in a confused jumble of unrelated "facts".

It is not by odds and ends of anatomical and medical knowledge that the great achievements of modern hygiene have been brought about. One underlying principle only had to be grasped : that those plagues and pestilences were due to the presence of unseen organisms, the transmission of which, by water, insects, contact, could be prevented. Once discovered, the explanation could be made understandable to a child.

Could a principle of prevention as easily explainable to the general public do for war what has been done for pestilence ?

Let that be answered by a series of propositions, some of them so self-evident as to be almost truisms.

If, as we saw in a previous chapter, Europe had not formed itself or grown into sovereign nations, it would not be riven by international war. There might be civil war, there might be strife of all kinds ; Europe as a unity somewhat similar to the forty-eight states of North America might have sacrificed things that have been worth all the cost of separate nationalities. That is a separate question. But if Europe constituted one sovereignty she would not face, though she might face worse evils, the particular problem with which we are dealing. To repeat the truism already enunciated, if there were no nations, nations would not go to war.

Note that the earlier part of the above proposition speaks of "sovereign" nations. As noted before, when this aspect came into the argument, Scotland and Wales are nations but they do not fight each other, nor fight England, though they did once. It is not the existence of nations, or the fact of nationality, which is the cause of war. War is due to the fact that we have attached to nationality the idea of independence and sovereignty : sovereignty and the anarchy which it necessarily implies make war. We fight each other because each has said :

We are a nation ; that is to say a corporate body, a personality, *therefore* each national person is independent, a law unto itself, shall acknowledge no code regulating its relations with other similar persons. These persons shall live together without government, without laws, without institutions for their framing, their alteration or their enforcement. For if such institutions existed those persons would not be independent or sovereign, they would be subject to rule, to law.

The "therefore" of the above statement is the supreme Unseen Assassin. It stands for a complete *non sequitur*. The nation makes, if you will, by deeply rooted psychological forces, a "herd", a corporate person. But there are other such corporate bodies too : the church, the caste, the clan ; sometimes the trade union, the club. But they do not ask that they shall be sovereign and independent ; the state, and the only state ; that

they shall enter into no effective partnership with any other human organisation (if partners are completely independent of each other they are not partners), owe allegiance to no other human authority.

The plain facts of history show that there was nothing "inevitable"—except in the sense that a social intelligence and discipline are of slow growth—in thus attaching to one particular form of association the quality of complete sovereignty, in dissociating it from disciplined co-operation with other groups. It was often a pure accident of history that sovereignty became attached to some groups and not to others.

There was a period after the revolution of the thirteen American colonies of Great Britain in which it seemed exceedingly doubtful whether they would form a federation at all. There was nothing inevitable about their doing so. The Spanish-American colonies when they revolted did not ; and the English-speaking colonies might not have done so save for several fortuitous circumstances : the character and influence of this or that statesman amongst them, fear of the strength of the mother country. If Britain had been in reality a decadent state the revolted colonies would almost certainly have failed to hang together in order not to hang separately.

If history had taken that turn we might as easily have had half a dozen nations (a French-speaking one, perhaps, on the St. Lawrence or in Louisiana ;

a Dutch-speaking one on the Hudson ; Spanish-speaking in California, etc.), just as we have a round dozen separate nations south of the Mexican border. We know that if such independent nations had been formed in what is now the United States (especially with differences of language and culture) they would have fought, as the independent nations which have resulted from the Spanish-American colonies have fought, even though *they* have no differences of language and culture. (Note in passing that the national characteristics, linguistic and racial, which distinguish, say, Wales from England, and both from Scotland, are far greater than those which distinguish the Chileno and the Peruvian, or the San Salvadorian and the Guatemalian. Those Spanish nations having complete sovereignty fight each other, or face the possibility by arming against each other ; the British nations, having only limited sovereignty, have ceased so to do.)

Put the illustration, as already suggested, in inverse form : Imagine that at some stage in the development of Europe—at the breakdown, say, of the Western Empire—some degree of effective authority had grouped round, say, the Church ; and the nations of Europe had become federalised states, like those of the American Union.¹ Then,

¹ Boniface VIII by a Bull claims that "all Kings, Emperors, and other Sovereigns, whoever they may be, are subject, like all other men, to be summoned before the Apostolic Courts, for every sort of cause : for we, by the permission of God, command the whole Universe." (R. F. Wright, *Medieval Internationalism*, p. 89.)

though there might be civil war, as there has been civil war in the American Union, the problem of international war and that chaos in the international economic field as we know it to-day, would not confront us.

Why does the claim to complete sovereignty and independence, the refusal to acknowledge allegiance to a common rule of conduct, the attempt of persons or corporate bodies, having multitudinous economic and social relations, to live without government, without appropriate social institutions, necessarily involve war? Though I am not going to suggest that the rules which govern persons should necessarily apply to nations (the reader will recall that a previous chapter dwelt upon the fallacy of identifying nations and persons), there are principles, like those of the multiplication table, for instance, to go no further, which must apply to both.

If someone were to propose to John Smith that in this closely packed complex modern world of ours, with its motor-cars travelling at sixty miles an hour; its inevitable difference of view as to what are the best traffic rules; as to who is responsible in this or that accident; what is suitable compensation in the event of injury; insurance laws; the necessary conflict of claims about property, rights of way, trespass, pollution of water, measures for the preservation of public health—if anyone were to suggest to him that in this sort of world you can do without legislative bodies, courts, police, without

governing institutions, that is, he would regard you as insane.

And he would not qualify the verdict at all if the proposer went on to explain that, since usually folk are fundamentally decent and can be relied upon to keep their word, the idea was to replace the complicated machinery of government by an undertaking on the part of everybody always to play fair ; never to take more than they were entitled to. Smith would reply that the question of goodwill was hardly involved ; that differences as to what was fair and what each was entitled to were usually quite honest differences, were just the point about which the quarrels arose, that rules (especially like those of the road with reference to driving cars) had to be kept, whatever the individual thought of them, and had to be enforced if he did not like them. Suggest to Smith that such a world can work without government, and he is sure you are insane. Suggest to him, however, that the closely interwoven life of those national persons we have been discussing, for reasons just as valid, need corresponding institutions of government, and he will equally regard you as insane.

Yet the results of anarchy, though dissimilar in the two cases, not manifested, that is, in quite the same way, are hardly less dreadful in the second ; as the last twenty years have shown.

Let us note the quite simple and understandable process by which with mechanical inevitability the method of anarchy produces conflict. One of

the primary impulses of man, as of any animal, is self-preservation, defence, security. And society, government, as the substitute for anarchy, has largely grown up around the organisation of that function. Let us see why.

Suppose I say :

I will be my own defender of my own rights, as against another, by being stronger than any who may challenge them. To allow others to come in and say what my rights are, means that I shall have to do the will of others, not my own, which is to deprive me of independence, freedom, sovereignty. I shall take measures therefore to see that my view of my rights shall prevail.

Very well. What is the position of that other who may disagree with my view of what my rights are ?

He says :

If you make yourself judge of a dispute in which the rights of both are involved, you are judge of my rights as well as your own. Why should you be judge of my rights any more than I should be judge of yours ? I prefer the latter arrangement.

Now that situation is bound to result in conflict because the "right" by which each stands involves in its very terms a denial of the other's claim. Each is demanding a right for himself which he refuses to the other.

There can be no general defence, security, "self-

preservation " under such a system because the defence of one deprives the other of defence ; the security of the one is the insecurity of the other ; " justice " for the one means injustice for the other. Under such a system you could only make both secure if each were stronger than the other ; each his own judge in a dispute where another is involved. It defies arithmetic, as it defies ethics.

You get exactly the same result whether you begin from another angle of anarchy : the assertion of neutrality by members of a group. Suppose my fellows say : " Your security is no concern of ours. We are neutral. If anyone steal your property or attempt to take your life, that is not our affair." If that is the attitude, then (speaking, say, as a feudal chief, or clan, or mere individual) I shall attempt to possess sufficient power to resist any threat to my security, that is to say, my rights (which means what I believe to be my rights). I shall try to be stronger than anyone likely to be a menace. That will make such a one weaker than me, put him at my mercy, though I refuse to be at his. In any dispute—any question of his rights as against mine—he will just have to trust to my goodwill, though I refuse to trust to his. *He* will be deprived of defence by the fact of *my* defence.

Now, as a statement of principle that is just as true whether the units you are speaking of are persons, families, clans, tribes, nations, or alliances. The multiplication table is just as valid or invalid whether you apply it to stars or cabbages. When a

Cabinet Minister says that the surest way to get peace is to be stronger than your prospective enemy, he is still asking each of the two parties to be stronger than the other, and gaily defying arithmetic.

Is the suggestion that such a method *must* end in conflict borne out by the event? *Circumspice.*

The proofs of the inevitability of war by such a method of defence make almost the whole of history in the international field. In order to be secure strategically or economically a nation includes within its borders a province of alien culture ; and on behalf of national solidarity begins to suppress that separate culture ; you get the agitations of an Alsace, or a Poland, or those which marked the Austro-Hungarian empire ; appeals to high heaven for the righting of wrongs ; and finally a " war for right " ; and the " right " side triumphs, as in the last war. (Never was a war so " right " as that war. We were assured so by practically all the professors of all our universities, practically all our clergy, all our writers, all our editors, all our poets, all our statesmen.) But the " right " side of course is no more fit to be its own judge than the wrong side ; and under this system it is always at the peace its own judge. With the result that it makes a grossly unjust peace, as it did, by now universal admission, at the end of this last, the rightest of all wars.¹

¹ As I correct the proofs of these pages there is going on in *The Times* a correspondence on the necessity of revising the Treaty of Versailles, as an indispensable precedent to the establishment of peace in Europe. *The Times* itself agrees.

If we follow historical precedent we shall now attempt to right the wrong by siding with Germany against France. France will take her stand by the Treaty, the Scrap of Paper ; but we shall take our stand by Justice. And out of that stand for justice (and it really may be justice) will come war ; and out of that war for justice will come injustice, as the Treaty of Versailles came out of the last war ; to be corrected by further war, which means more injustice . . . as far as the Pit.

So we cannot say that experience fails to confirm that unworkability of the principle to which the examination of the internal evidence would point.

Now, as against this method of anarchy—of each being his own defender, and consequently his own judge—the whole experience of man points a contrary method. Its general lines are these : No one shall be judge in his own cause, which means that he should not be his own defender. The combined power of the whole group shall be used to ensure the defence of each member ; that is to say, the enjoyment of such rights as experience has shown to make for a workable and orderly co-operation at any given stage of a society's development. The first right of all is the right to third-party judgment in a dispute with another, so that that other, party to the dispute, does not become its judge. There is this contrast as between the use of force socially and anarchically. In a state of anarchy the power of each individual is used to enable him to be his own judge ; under the social

method the power of the community is used to *prevent* any individual being his own judge.

These are the issues as between the method of anarchy and the method of organised society whether of persons or of states. It is perfectly open to argue that the method which has proved feasible in the case of persons will not for this, that or the other reason work in the case of states. There is, alas ! a strong case for the belief that in the latter case we are condemned to anarchy, and so to war because the momentum of certain traditions like the Jingo-militarist-nationalist tradition is such as to render us incapable of the necessary discipline or intelligence.

But it is *not* open to say this : " We will now have peace between nations by means of a properly organised society of nations. Each member of that society shall be neutral in any dispute between the others ; the society as a whole shall have no responsibility for the defence of individual members ; each shall take his own measures for defence ; and each shall be independent and sovereign."

For that is mere contradiction of terms : If each is neutral, sovereign, independent, then there can be no society. But that is exactly what so many of us, most of us, *are* saying, and the most serious and tragic part of it is that we do not see the contradiction.

An educated man, a distinguished civil servant, the member of an organisation created for the purpose of studying international questions, wrote

“as a Pacifist, a Free Trader and”—note this detail—“a friend of the League of Nations” to the *Spectator* as follows :

My loyalty and my allegiance are due to my own country, not to any foreign organisation. I do not consider that Englishmen are under any moral or contractual obligation to sacrifice the interests of England or their conception of right and justice to the resolutions of an Assembly of foreign politicians. . . . The questions of a double allegiance and of foreign control of English policy is an issue on which the British people have already pronounced judgment, and they have not, so far as I know, changed their opinion since they did so centuries ago. . . . The sole authority with power to declare England at war is the British Government that for the time being enjoys the confidence of the British nation ; and the sole authority empowered to disburse British money or pledge British credit is the British Parliament.

The League of Nations, of which the writer of the above proclaims himself a friend, is more accurately described by the continentals as a “Society” of Nations. It is indeed the beginnings of an attempt to make of the national persons an organised society.

Imagine a member of the more familiar social organisation within the state saying :

My only duties are to myself, not to any group of neighbours. I do not consider that I am under any obligation to sacrifice my interests, or my views of my own rights, to any Assembly or Legislature. The ques-

tion whether I should permit others to control my behaviour is an issue upon which I have already pronounced judgment. As to any contribution to police force, to the defence of others, the sole authority empowered to disburse my money for any purpose is myself.

And then imagine that this social philosopher had added the slogans common to Nationalism the world over : " Myself alone " ; " Myself first " ; " Sacro egoismo " ; " Myself above all others " ; " Myself right or wrong ". And then, realise that the person thus educated has to live in a closely packed society, where such questions as the disposal of sewage so as not to pollute the water of others, of rights of way, of traffic rules on motor roads, demand daily settlement. What sort of society would you be likely to get ?

The seriousness of the statement quoted above resides in the fact that it comes, not from a Lord Beaverbrook desiring the destruction of the League, or a William Randolph Hearst voicing a crude American Jingoism, but from a sincere friend of peace, and of the League.

It is indeed a very common attitude among sincere friends of peace, usually revealed when any discussion of commitments under the League is in progress. It is, or was until yesterday, the prevailing attitude in America, where the assumption is all but universal, not merely that an independence expressed in complete isolationism is compatible with peace, but that it is the surest road to peace.

The Kellogg Pact may prove to be one of the most valuable documents of history, but its value lies in implications that are not generally realised ; it is sometimes supported for reasons which are the contrary of those which give it value.

It is a solemn undertaking not to go to war except for self-defence. It was, is, supported by a great public which sees no inconsistency in its signature and (a) the maintenance of great and increasing national forces, and (b) the refusal to commit the nation beforehand to submission of its cause of quarrel to third-party judgment, arbitration or court, (c) refusal to participate in any common action for the restraint of the nation that violates its pledge. That is to say, it is legitimate for each to defend himself by arms, but illegitimate to combine for the common defence of each—defence of the right of each to impartial judgment—by the whole.

It is plain that those who thus at one and the same time demand heavy defensive armaments, refuse obligatory arbitration *and* give an undertaking not to go to war, assume that war is due to the *consciously* aggressive policy of nations ; to the assumption that if nations abide by their sincere undertaking only to use their armament for defensive purpose there will never be war ; that a nation is perfectly aware when it is acting defensively and when not ; and can be trusted by its own sole judgment, presuming only that it is sincere, to use its weapons justly.

Now this view that, if nations will honestly observe their undertaking to confine the use of their arms to defence, there will be no war, is denied, not alone by the common facts of history¹ which the ordinary voter may be excused for not knowing, but by the commonest facts of everyday experience in personal quarrels. The trouble with war, as with the worst personal quarrels, is precisely that each side honestly believes itself to be right, to be acting defensively ; the sincerity of each side, the blazing conviction that the other is wrong, is precisely the greatest difficulty. No one who has ever attempted to straighten out a quarrel between two persons over some relatively simple matter can have failed to note with what amazing ease *honest* differences can arise : and this in the case of matters, the details of which are entirely within the knowledge of each of the two parties. How much more easily, therefore, in the case of national quarrels where the facts are necessarily for the most part altogether outside the personal knowledge of those who make up the public ; and where we

¹ Mr. Kellogg suggested resistance to invasion as the test of "defensive" war. That test would have condemned as aggressive every foreign war in which America has been engaged since she became an independent state, since not one was to resist invasion. Her first war was in the Mediterranean ; her second did not arise in order to resist invasion but to vindicate sea claims ; her third was fought in Mexico ; her fourth at sea and in Cuba against Spain ; her fifth in the Philippines ; her sixth in France. The history of most great states is similar. The British army has fought in every country of the world this eight hundred years except in Britain to resist invasion. Defence does not mean merely defence of territory, but defence of interests, rights, which may collide in every corner of the world.

permit ourselves a partisanship, a "my country right or wrong" attitude, we should never dream of adopting in personal matters.

We know by the commonest experience of everyday life—in business, in every form of personal dispute—that we should be brought to deadlock if we began on the assumption that each party could be trusted to be his own judge. Still less could we trust that judgment if the party exercising it had unquestioned preponderance of power over the other. We are aware that the acceptance of the principle of third-party judgment, when we come to contentious matters, is the only possible basis of peace; that even that cannot operate until there is some agreement as to "what is right"; that the whole process is dependent upon a certain apparatus—law making, law interpreting, law enforcing—and that without that apparatus the mere goodwill of each party would be hopelessly inadequate. We are perfectly aware that the breakdown of the institutions would be simply equivalent to the breakdown of civilisation, of peace; that always indeed have the two things been coincident. A round score of ancient civilisations broke down, because their institutions collapsed under some strain: the one collapse involved the other.

Yet this commonplace experience of daily life is not by popular judgment applied to the field of international policies at all. We genuinely care for peace; are deeply apprehensive about the recurrence of war. But, speaking broadly, we are

quite indifferent about the creation of institutions, for the simple reason that we do not see the relation between the maintenance of peace and the difficult, hazardous and easily defeated task of building up a world society.

This failure to see any real relation between the two things is manifest enough. Peace is popular. If to-day a public man in England or America were to do what he could have done with safety before (or during) the war—pronounce some panegyric on war itself, express the hope that it would come to save us from “slothful ease” (that sort of thing was common enough in the nineteenth century), it would be about as much as his public life was worth. People would be genuinely shocked. No one would really dare do it. But the other day the proprietor of a chain of popular newspapers, in momentary need of some new “stunt”, decided to rampage for the withdrawal of Britain from the League of Nations, the first attempt of man to deal scientifically with the problem of war. Nobody was particularly indignant. It created hardly more than a ripple of interest one way or the other (an indifference of course of which the newspaper proprietor is thoroughly aware). A stunt about drinking-licences in park restaurants, or the Charing Cross Bridge dispute, would have excited much more interest ; but they were not on the *tapis* that morning, and the destruction of the League of Nations might fill the gap for a day or two.

For, of course, British withdrawal would mean

the end of the League. At long last, after agonies which, in one war alone, have been such that we dare not look upon them, man has decided to make an attempt at putting an end to the anarchy which produces them. It is a hesitating, very halting attempt, but thanks to the fact that a few of the best of men everywhere are working devotedly for its success, it has acquired a real vitality. It looks like living. But because it is yet little more than an embryo it can easily be killed. And a newspaper proprietor who has become a millionaire by giving the public what it wants, thinks he will see whether he cannot fan a Jingoistic Imperialism sufficiently to kill it. He may succeed. And the public is perfectly indifferent.

America has not even got as far as a League of Nations. In that country, education (of the million, that is) to the end of enabling the mass to understand the world in which they live, the relationship of their nation to mankind as a whole, seems to have been limited to nursing what one of their writers has called "an ancient grudge", so that an astute politician fighting a municipal election finds it useful, a hundred and fifty years after the American revolution, to fulminate (incidentally to the sons of Italians, Poles, Bohemians, Czechs and Slovaks, who have acquired American Jingoism through the medium of school history teaching) against the hateful tyranny of Britain and her oppressive King, George the Fifth. The measure of the common understanding of the nature of the

modern world may be indicated by the fact that in America the whole problem of contact with other nations is usually summed up by a phrase, used in an entirely different age, in entirely different circumstances, in an entirely different world. When an American politician has duly pronounced the incantation "no entangling alliances" he may safely dismiss any further discussion of his obligation to "foreigners".

The important thing which emerges is this : We do not apply the plain lessons of daily life to the task of that ending of war we all desire. In what has just been written there is an implied condemnation of educational method. Some of our educationalists are genuinely disturbed about what they are apt to call our lack of knowledge of foreign countries, and propose to remedy it by imparting information bearing on the lives of peoples other than our own. We are assured that international understanding would be promoted by knowing other nations better. I doubt it. The bitterest quarrels—like the religious conflicts of India and Ireland—are between communities that live in the same street, live all their lives in close contact and know each other very well indeed. It is the understanding of the necessary principles of just and peaceful human relationship that is needed. The facts which bear on that are available to us all, inherent in the commonest problems of our personal contact. We do not need to know any more facts about remote peoples, whether about Esquimaux

or the Nestorians. We need to realise the meaning in social principle of the facts we already know. And the way in which education has taught us to think about human society is such that we fail to apply at points where most needed, to the solution of our gravest and most urgent problems, principles which emerge most obviously from the facts of daily life.

We have dealt so far with one perfectly understandable social principle. Let us take two others, just as simple, and closely related to it, and which reveal in popular understanding the same contradictions, the same *non sequiturs*, the same failure to apply the commonest experience of one situation to another only slightly less familiar.

No argument is so readily used by the ordinary voter as an excuse for his inertia or indifference in the matter of international institutions, for his refusal, that is, to deal with the problem of international anarchy, as he has dealt with anarchy elsewhere, as this argument : You will never get over human nature. Man, he will tell you, is, by the very law of his being, a fighting animal ; pugnacious, inherently unreasonable, one-sided, passionate . . . If I have heard this argument once, I have heard it a thousand times. It is usually presented as the final, complete, unanswerable case against international action towards peace, against such efforts as the League.

Yet this fact of man's anti-social instincts is, of course, the final and fundamental case *for* the

League, not against. If human nature were perfect, if men were naturally other-minded, always ready to see the other's point of view, never likely to lose their tempers, then certainly we should not need the League, international institutions. But neither should we need most of our national institutions. They are the means by which we cope with the imperfections of human nature ; that imperfection is the reason for the institutions. Yet the educated man who invokes the human nature argument *against* international institutions, daily thinks of it as the supreme argument *for* national institutions. Say to him : men are quarrelsome, avaricious, one-sided, quite incapable of judging their own case, therefore let us abolish the courts and have no laws, and he will see the inconsequence in a moment. Yet suggest that he should establish corresponding institutions for nations and he deems it an adequate reply to declare that nations are quarrelsome, avaricious, one-sided, quite incapable of being their own judge. He goes his life through without seeing that that fact which he uses for one conclusion in a familiar situation, he uses for an exactly opposite conclusion in a slightly less familiar situation, and only so turns it upside down because the second situation is less familiar.

But what shall we say of education for society which produces in the mass of men that degree of understanding of the world in which they live, that much of capacity for using known fact to frame social judgments ?

Or take an equally simple instance of elementary confusion touching the principles by which society functions. Constantly one hears the argument : A nation's army or navy is its policeman ; armies and navies exist for the same reason that the police force exists. A favourite plea of the plain man.

Yet it might occur to him that police forces are not organised to fight each other, and that armies are. National armies as we now know them are organised for a purpose which ultimately, and broadly is the exact reverse of the purpose for which police are organised, since, in the last analysis, armies are (as we have seen) forces behind rival litigants, and the police is the force behind the judge. The police represent the combined power of the whole community (of persons) used to ensure to each member of that community his agreed rights under the law, and as part of the process, to restrain any member from using his individual force to be his own judge. If in a dispute with my neighbour about a right of way, I break down his fence to defend what I regard as my right, and invade what he regards as his property, he will invoke the police, who will restrain me from being my own defender, since, if I had that right of defence, I should be my own judge, and deny by that fact a similar right to him. The whole ultimate purpose of the police is to restrain me from using my power in that way. The community has assumed the obligation of my defence. But the nation which says : We will retain force in the

shape of an army or navy powerful enough to resist anyone likely to challenge its power ; but that force shall not be part of the power of the community (of nations) pledged to defend each member, but a tool enabling us to be our own defender, which means in the last resort, our own judge—that nation has obviously repudiated the police method.

The object of an army or navy is to enable the individual to impose its individual will ; the object of the police is to restrain that individual from imposing his will. The police method is to make the defence of the individual the obligation of the whole community ; the method of armies and navies as they now exist rejects that in favour of each defending himself. One is a social instrument ; the other is an instrument of anarchy ; the one depends upon competition of power, “ each being stronger than the other ” ; the other upon pooled power, the co-operation of the whole in the maintenance of agreed rights. The two methods are plainly mutually exclusive. Yet all my life I have heard from educated men the weary phrase about needing armies for the same reason that we need police.

Whether every stage or phase of the preceding argument touching what I have called the mechanism of society be valid or not, is not for the moment in question. The point is that, at a juncture when the maintenance of civilisation depends upon a relatively simple and logical development in the

organisation of society, education has not equipped the public mind even to the extent of enabling it to grasp the elements of the argument, the simplest of the issues involved.

The implications are unfamiliar to the mass of ordinary men, to the scholars turned out by our schools. It is not that they are familiar with the arguments, have applied them to the problems in hand and rejected them as invalid. I say without any hesitation, on the basis of the rather special experience of having argued the internationalist case during thirty years, in several countries, that the mass of ordinary men who form our voters, have not been led to think about the necessary mechanism of society, or to think of society as having a necessary mechanism at all ; or to think about the nature of society ; or to be conscious that there is such a thing as a definitely organised society. They have learned a number of rules of conduct, and have accepted them, usually as an entirely arbitrary code ; the reason for them in terms of social welfare is for the most part entirely disregarded.

If John Smith made a case for anarchy, or a case (such as that made before the war by certain political philosophers in Germany) for the establishment of order in the world by the ultimate domination of one national state, one would feel that though his education had made him a bad reasoner, it had at least turned his mind to dealing with the nature of the social universe in which he lived, and his relation thereto. But you will find the modern

European asserting such principles as an absolutist nationalism because his education simply has not related that thing to the needs of organised society at all.

What, for instance, is the record of European education in this matter of nationalism ?

All agree that it is—among others—an extremely dangerous tendency. All on the Allied side said that of the pre-war German nationalism ; all the non-French world said it of French nationalism as manifested in the Dreyfus case ; Germany, ourselves and the Americans have been saying it of certain aspects of post-war French nationalism ; America and the world have said it of British nationalism (especially as revealed in claims relating to belligerent rights at sea). We have said it of American nationalism as revealed in such incidents as Cleveland's Venezuelan message, the ridiculous but not harmless Anglophobia of the Bill Thompsons and the William Randolph Hearsts. To say that the nationalist's impulse cannot become a very dangerous impulse is not only to deny all evidence, but indeed to deny what all of us are saying.

Very well. Go to the histories, the text-books, in current use in the schools of Europe and America ; note the attitude towards nationalism and patriotism. Is this necessary warning as to the dangerous ways in which patriotism may develop stressed ? The exactly contrary thing is done. One of the features which gives to nationalism its danger is precisely the feature which is hidden ; the quality

most dangerous is developed. That quality is its one-sidedness, its astigmatism ; the fact that it refuses to recognise in others the rights that it claims for itself ; refuses to regard those others as on the same plane as itself. "We are different." Other nations may make of their patriotism a dangerous force ; but *we* can never be too patriotic.

It would be superfluous to give examples ; pages, of course, could be filled with them. Here are a handful grabbed at random :

"What in the first place is French mentality ?" inquired Jean Finot.¹ "It is the quintessence of civilisation and of universal progress enriched by the fruit of French genius, which is at the same time both comprehensive and creative."

Fichte² assured his German countrymen that "among all modern peoples, it is you in whom the germ of the perfecting of humanity most decidedly lies, and on whom progress in the development of this humanity is enjoined. If you perish as a nation, all the hope of the entire human race for rescue from the depths of its woe perishes with you. . . ."

"The Germans", said Elihu Root,³ "are only half civilised in all that makes for civilisation. . . . She (Germany) has the abnormal instincts which characterise her barbarisms and separate her from any civilised people. She has the intolerance, the incapacity to realise the right of existence of others, which characterises her and her people as barbarians. . . . This war is a

¹ Jean Finot, *Race Prejudice*, p. 265.

² J. G. Fichte, quoted by G. Franke, *The German Classics*, vol. 5, pp. 104-5.

³ Elihu Root, before the American Society of International Law, April, 1918.

war between the civilisation of this century and the semi-civilisation of the past."

M. Paul Sabatier,¹ biographer of St. Francis of Assisi, wrote during the war to an Italian friend: "A Frenchman cannot now utter the word 'peace'. To use it would be akin to treason. . . . To make peace when an ideal is at stake is an abdication. . . . No doubt we are fighting for ourselves, but we are fighting too, for all the peoples. . . . The France to-day is fighting religiously. Catholics, Protestants, men of Free Thought, we all feel that our sorrows renew, continue to fulfil those of the innocent Victim of Calvary."

"The whole story of France since Cæsar", said Professor Adolph Wagner,² "is a long chronicle of war and of conquest. The glory of which you are proudest is your military glory. Look what a fuss you make about Napoleon. . . . You are the battle lovers. We Germans are not enough so. The military spirit descended on us too late."

"The servile docility of the Germans", wrote the French Professor, Gustave Le Bon,³ "made Frederick the Great exclaim that he was tired of governing slaves. . . . Among the characteristics which are most prevalent in the German mentality may be mentioned brutality, lack of good-breeding, and an entire absence of the chivalrous spirit. . . . Insincerity is one of the commonest German defects."

Treitschke⁴ once said bluntly: "To tell the truth, the Slav seems to us a born slave."

¹ M. Paul Sabatier, *The Ideals of France*, pp. 3, 4, 5.

² Quoted by Georges Bourdon, *The German Enigma*, p. 77.

³ Gustave Le Bon, *The Psychology of the Great War*, pp. 103, 104, 105, 108.

⁴ Quoted by J. Holland Rose, *The Development of the European Nations*, p. 612.

“In the string of recorded events”, exclaimed a member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences,¹ “the largest beads standing out most conspicuously are the literature and culture created in Bulgaria, known as Slavic, and the idea of democracy and reformation to which Bulgaria gave birth.”

Westermarck and other ethnologists have collected volumes of it. The Esquimaux have a legend that European races came first from a bungling attempt on the part of the Creator : a batch of prentice-work discarded and thrown aside when the true Greenlander was made. “As stupid as a white man,” say the Chippewas ; “as stupid as an Englishman” is a Polynesian byword, and the climax is reached in the contempt poured upon the rest of mankind by the Veddahs of Ceylon, who “live on uncooked reptiles, clothe themselves in leaves, cannot count or distinguish colours, and never laugh.”²

And so on, endlessly.

Take the case of the two nations with whose nationalism we have perhaps the greatest concern : the case of France and Germany, since the problem of peaceful organisation of the world may narrow down very largely to the closing of the age-long breach between those two countries. Little progress seems to have been made in that healing. Yesterday we blamed Germany as the guilty party and fought for France, as the one way of saving freedom, or civilisation, or democracy, or whatever it was that we were saving ; to-day we blame

¹ D. Mishew, *The Bulgarians in the Past*, p. vi.

² *The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas*.

France and face the possibility at no very distant date of having to fight for Germany as against our Ally of yesterday. Yet those two nations whose nationalist resentments and fears threaten to engulf us all are, as we have noted, the two most saturated, each in its particular way, with education, learning, culture. Germany, more than any other nation in the world, has been subjected to the drill of school and university; France has a literary tradition which gives her also a special position in Europe.

It is impossible to examine the growth of this nationalist religion in Europe without being struck by the enormous part played therein by the educated, by learning and literature. It is not the peasant toiling in his fields, not the craftsman busy with the creation of his hands, who gets poisoned so badly with this insane root. Left to himself, the worker would probably be indifferent enough to the holy mission of his nation to dominate mankind, or to "redeem" distant territory. But played upon by the poet, the historian, the journalist, the orator, the politician, the philosopher, the preacher, the professor of all kinds, he becomes the victim—and instrument—of the theories hatched in the studies. One sometimes wonders, incidentally, in noting the ferocity of these literary and professorial belligerents, whether the sedentary nature of their occupation has not a good deal to do with their belligerency.

An authority who has recently devoted special study to the phenomenon of nationalism stresses

this very point. Professor Carlton Hayes in his *Essays on Nationalism*¹ writes :

The doctrine of Nationalism was primarily the work of intellectuals—of scholars and litterateurs. . . . The middle classes took it first. Especially from the upper middle class came its staunchest disciples and apostles, and naturally so. . . . In Europe throughout the nineteenth century and in America latterly they were usually trained in colleges and universities, where nationalist professors through lectures and personal contacts exercised an enormous influence. . . . If we were to review the actual course of nationalism in any European country in the nineteenth century we would be struck by the early prominence of professors, lawyers, physicians, merchants and bankers.

If one examine any of the typical cases of mass error—the political folly of the Crimean War, the absurdities of American Anglophobia, the wrong-headedness of the Dreyfus affair, the “Germanic super-man” nonsense of Pre-war Prussianism, the silliness of post-war reparations demands—one finds the greatest lights of literature at one with the mass. Here one sees a Kingsley or a Tennyson lauding the spirit which drew England into the Crimean War, pouring contempt and scorn upon those who would have stayed her hand ; there the lights of French literature ranged on the side of the

¹ Professor Hayes goes on to make an interesting analysis of this relation between nationalism and the upper classes with which I am not just now concerned to deal, limiting my present purpose to a statement of certain facts of public opinion, without for the moment considering their

military power against the civil authority in the Dreyfus affair ; elsewhere a Treitschke voicing Germanic world domination ; or a Swinburne or a Kipling becoming the poet and literary protagonist of some of the most doubtful forms of later British Imperialism, as we find a d'Annunzio the protagonist of the most mischievous of Italian political tendencies.

It is no part of my argument, of course, to imply that no educated people were included among those (in the sum total happily a very large number both in Europe and America) who spoke and wrote against the follies of war-time settlement. My point is that the educated class showed no larger proportion of such than the " uneducated " : the universities, the clubs, the churches were not more immune from the contagion of unreason than any average trade union or Oddfellows' Society. If that be true—and no one with knowledge of the ground would deny it—of what avail was the learning in that particular trouble ?

CHAPTER VII

THE PERSISTENCE OF SMITH'S ILLUSIONS

Do we believe in the case for social co-operation at all? The basis of all society is the assumption that it is better to combine to fight nature than to fight each other. Yet this assumption, which is fundamental to all society, was either flatly repudiated before the war so far as the relations of states were concerned, or was lost in amazing confusions and contradictions of thought and language: confusions shared alike by "educated" and the "uneducated". How an attempt to clear up some of these confusions was largely defeated by a more amazing confusion still. A little footnote of literary history.

TO the case which attempts to show that in our national conduct we repudiate the indispensable conditions of an international social order, the reply is apt to run something like this:

You miss the essence of the situation. Of course we can all understand the case for government and order, but the nations are not engaged in establishing a society, do not want a society established, just because each is engaged in struggling for its life. In the international field the old rule of the jungle obtains—and must obtain. And it comes ill from us—the British, the Americans, the French—fat with the spoil of centuries, to say to others less lucky in the fight, "Having secured all the big prizes and got all we can possibly consume

while you are poor and hungry, let us now agree to be brothers and not to steal from each other any more."

A year or two before the war there appeared a book called *The Struggle for Bread*. It stated in popular and uncompromising terms the generally accepted view that in the last analysis war did indeed represent the struggle of men for bread, for life : part of that law of survival which is the law of all living things dependent on an earth of limited sustenance, the law that they who survive are those who can oust their rivals. In the modern world, the author of the book in question explained, this struggle was, of course, expressed in terms of trade, finance, investment, seizure of sources of raw material, colonisation.

He had no difficulty in showing that nearly all the authorities, English, American, German, French, the writers and professors who dealt with problems of foreign policy and economics in relation thereto, were on his side.

Previously to the appearance of that book the present writer had pointed out how all but universally popular thought followed that view. Here are a few typical expressions of that time :

"The same struggle for life and space which more than a thousand years ago drove one Teutonic wave after another across the Rhine and the Alps is now once more a great compelling force. Colonies fit to receive the German surplus population are the greatest need of Germany. This aspect of the case may be all

very sad and very wicked, but it is true. . . . Herein lies the temptation and the danger. Herein, too, lies the ceaseless and ruinous struggle of armaments, and herein for France lies the dire necessity for linking her foreign policy with that of powerful allies.

"Germany *must* expand. Every year an extra million babies are crying out for more room ; and, as the expansion of Germany by peaceful means seems impossible, Germany can only provide for those babies at the cost of potential foes, and France is one of them.

"A vanquished France might give Germany all she wants. The immense colonial possessions of France present a tantalising and provoking temptation to German cupidity, which, it cannot be too often repeated, is not mere envious greed but stern necessity."—*National Review*.

"If Germany were extinguished to-morrow, the day after to-morrow there is not a British subject in the world who would not be richer. Nations have fought for years over a city or the right of succession. Must they not fight for two hundred and fifty million pounds of yearly commerce ?"—*Saturday Review*.

"Why should Germany attack Britain ? Because Germany and Britain are commercial and political rivals ; because Germany covets the trade, the colonies, and the Empire which Britain now possesses."—Robert Blatchford, *Germany and England*.

"Great Britain, with her present population, exists by virtue of her foreign trade and her control of the carrying trade of the world ; defeat in war would mean the transference of both to other hands and consequent starvation for a large percentage of the wage earners."—T. G. Martin in the *World*.

"Sea-power is the last fact which stands between Germany and the supreme position in international commerce. Does any man who understands the subject think there is any power in Germany, or, indeed, any power in the world, which can prevent Germany from now closing with Great Britain for her ultimate share of this 240 millions of overseas trade? Here it is that we unmask the shadow which looms like a real presence behind all the moves of present-day diplomacy, and behind all the colossal armaments that indicate the present preparations for a new struggle for sea-power."—Mr. Benjamin Kidd in the *Fortnightly Review*, April 1, 1910.

"The armaments of European States are not so much for protection against conquest as to secure to themselves the utmost possible share of the unexploited or imperfectly exploited regions of the world—the outlying markets, or storehouses of raw material, which, under national control, shall minister to national emolument. The case is much like that of the ownership of ore-fields by the Steel Trust, of which we have heard so much; the natural, and certainly not unwise, wish of the manufacturer to command his own sources of fuel and raw materials."

"It is the great amount of unexploited raw material in territories politically backward, and now imperfectly possessed by the nominal owners, which at the present moment constitutes the temptation and the impulse to war of European States."—Mahan: *Armaments and Arbitration*.

"Strong, healthy, and flourishing nations increase in numbers. From a given moment they require a continual expansion of their frontiers, they require territory for the accommodation of their surplus population.

Since almost every part of the globe is inhabited, new territory must as a rule be obtained at the cost of its possessors—that is to say by conquest, which thus becomes a law of necessity.”—Bernhardi, *Germany and the Next War*.

They could of course be multiplied indefinitely. And they can be duplicated in current literature, sufficiently to provoke the question whether the results of the war to-day are generally interpreted as disproving the assumption that military victory is the means by which a nation can most effectively ensure its economic security.

A quite recent book, Mr. Ludwell Denny's *America Conquers Britain* (published in 1929), which has had a large measure of popularity, is written largely round a thesis which the author thus indicates :

A state of economic war exists between America and Britain now. The question is whether this economic war, and its resultant political conflict, will lead to armed war. Capitalists and officials, and public opinion which controls or fails to control policies, can prevent a war of guns. They cannot stop the economic war, they can only mitigate its dangers.

For this economic war is not caused by popular misunderstandings, nor by capitalist machinations, nor by imperialistic governmental policies. These intensify but do not create the conflict. Rather are they created by it. The conflict is the natural and inevitable result of economic conditions obtaining in the two countries and in the world.

Another book by an American author—Judge

Bausman's *Facing Europe*—highly praised by an eminent American historian, develops the same theme :

Trade is essential to the life of England, not only trade, but the carriage of the world's goods. By trade she lives. Has any country ever peacefully suffered another country to make it poor? Would any country without a fight let its bread and meat be taken by the tradesmen and mariners of another?

We must not overlook the beginning of a serious conflict of interests between us, reflecting besides that Great Britain has in the past three centuries humbled Spain, France, the Netherlands, and Germany, each as it rose to a point where it could dispute her dominion over the seas. We are gradually already doing the same thing by taking from her that world trade which goes with her dominion and which we must eventually protect with a navy of colossal size.

Let us not forget that in raw materials her empire is richer than the United States and that she is constantly prepared, as a part of her immemorial policy, for a possible war on the seas with any other power. Thus Halifax is kept fortified, heavily fortified, as an outpost near our coast. In preserving her maritime pre-eminence Britain is sleepless, and she has become sleepless to-day as to air power also, which she perceives is indispensable to sea-power. If it be argued that Britain must lose Canada in a war with us, the answer is that such a war will not be undertaken until by alliance or armaments it is certain to be successful, in which event Canada must be delivered back to her.

And much more to the same effect.

One magazine writer, in an article appropriately entitled "Fists Across the Sea",¹ dots the i's in the assumption of war as a process of taking or attempting to take each other's property by suggesting that before the debt negotiations are finished the American government

might be obliged . . . to ask France for all her Colonial possessions, and Great Britain for the maritime provinces and British Columbia.

Twenty-five years ago this present writer had the hardihood to attempt to show that the whole case as presented or implied in statements like the foregoing (and they are typical statements) is fallacious ; that owing to certain characteristic developments of the modern world, of which those statements take no account, you cannot really " take " things at all by conquest ; that military power can no longer be used for the transfer of wealth or trade from vanquished to victor ; that belief in the possibility of such transfer arose largely from the use of terms like " ownership " of territory and the " capture " of trade, terms which have either lost all meaning or are used so loosely as grossly to distort our thought about the real facts. The book in which this attempt was made suggested that until we had cleared up these confusions we could not know what we were discussing in international politics, what we were asking of one another ; what we were giving up, what risks we were taking, what

¹ *Harper's*, February,

was vital, what was trivial ; and that so long as that was so we should fail in our attempts to create an orderly society and be everlastingly entangled in confusions, and misunderstandings inevitably leading to war.

I have no intention of re-writing here that earlier book, or of examining in detail how far the results of the war itself have confirmed its main proposition. My purpose is rather to point out the essential simplicity of that main proposition ; to ask why something so simple, so nearly self-evident, and the understanding of which is so indispensable to the maintenance of any social order, came as something of a shock to its generation ; why it had not, long before the appearance of the book, become a commonplace ; and to point out that any clarification of prevailing confusion which the book might have achieved was largely defeated by a childish misinterpretation of its purpose, a self-evidently false misinterpretation, which was itself evidence of failure to apply known facts to social relationships. The whole incident bears rather illuminatingly on education for social understanding.

The case then challenged was one embodied in whole libraries of erudite books, pretentious philosophies professing to apply biological truth to the political field, the whole buttressed by voluminous historical research. Yet of it all we can say this : The event, the present results of the war, and the policies which the nations have since of sheer

necessity been compelled to pursue, all but completely falsify those assumptions of yesterday ; and that their disproof could have been found before the war in simple outstanding facts that had already become universal knowledge. It was indeed in the terms of such facts that I argued the contrary case.

Take this basic case for the inevitability of war as the biological struggle of an indefinitely increasing number of mouths in a definitely limited world : the fight for bread. What really happens in modern as distinct from earlier times ? The hungry nation has its war and is successful. Is the conquered population—in India, Tunis, the Transvaal, Alsace, where you will—wiped out ? Since the victorious power wants markets the conquered territory is developed ; the attempt is made to give its population added chances of life. There are more mouths ; not fewer.

Take the assumption that a victor seizes its defeated enemy's wealth or trade. When a state like Germany conquers a province like Alsace, or France conquers it back, is there then a transfer of property from one group of owners to another ? There is not. The fields, factories, houses, furniture, stocks and shares remain in the same hands as before conquest. There is a change of administration which may be bad, good or indifferent ; worth while going to war to resist, perhaps. But conquest no more involves transfer of wealth than the inclusion of any outlying suburb into a city means the transfer of the suburban pianos and

curtains to the urban "owners". There are a variety of exceptions, but they affect but microscopically the general truth.

One critic quoted above put it that Germany would be compelled to fight us because their people needed the wheat of Canada and the wool of Australia. Is that wheat and wool then not available to Germans? Do the Canadian farmers refuse to sell their wheat to Germans or the Australian their wool? Do they sell less readily than to us who "own" those colonies? Would the Germans get it cheaper if *they* "owned" Canada? And do we "own" Canada at all? What do you, John Smith of Surbiton, "own" in Canada or South Africa by virtue of the flag which slightly in the one case and not at all in the other resembles Britain's? Does our "ownership" of Canada enable Mr. Snowden to make up the deficit in his budget? We "own" a fifth of the world's surface and a fourth of its population, and we are at our wits' end to know how to find a few million to pay the unemployment benefit of our two-and-a-half million unemployed.

The assumption was—is—that somehow you can dispose of a foreign nation's competition by beating that nation in war. (That is why America and Britain are now, according to the pundits, blowing up for war.) But when the war is over the defeated people remain; they are ready to work as hard, and sell as cheaply, as before.

During the war our press was eloquent of the

way in which victory would enable us to "capture" Germany's foreign trade. Where is this captured trade? Has victory enabled us to check Germany's competition? Have her people ceased to work or her ships ceased to trade?

Incidentally, is the destruction of Germany, which by the "struggle for life" theory we should now be engaging in, the present preoccupation of our government, bankers, business people, industrialists or workers? It is not. We, and a large part of the world, are desperately concerned at this moment to do our utmost to put Germany on her feet; are sacrificing out of our dire need sums due to us in order to achieve the result. The most isolationist of all Great Powers, the America that for years has shouted her unconcern in others' affairs, initiated the latest action by the Powers as a whole to save Germany, prompted thereto in sure knowledge that if Germany goes over the abyss we may go too.¹

¹ Even our popular and all at one time ferociously anti-Hun press that clamoured for a Carthaginian peace now recognise it. The *Daily Express* (July 21) in a leading article says:

Behold the nations that fought Germany for four years, and broke her, now desperately trying to put the pieces together again.

Behold conquered Germany leading her conquerors by the ears from one morass to another.

In this chaotic collapse of industry and finance threatening a yet wider social crash, who are the victors and who the vanquished?

War has become ridiculous. A Martian viewing the present spectacle of Europe would burst his ribs with laughter.

All Quiet on the Western Front was a book that moved by its unvarnished horrors. But the serial now being devoured by the whole universe, "Hell on the Financial Fronts," strikes deeper and will be remembered

Why does this sort of thing happen after war in our days?

It was not always thus. The Danes could come and seize cattle and gold, and even the Normans whole estates, and make the operation profitable.

Why does the modern world have to care for its enemy?

Because the division of labour has become so complex that it is better to secure his co-operation in exploiting the earth than to waste both his and our energy fighting each other. When North America supported half a million Indians they were always fighting each other for sustenance—hunting grounds. Theirs was indeed the struggle for bread. To-day the same territory supports three or four hundred times as many persons at an immeasurably higher standard of life. Not only is it true that they do not achieve this by fighting each other, but they could not possibly achieve it if they did.

But with the increase of co-operation comes increase of interdependence. A feudal chief, producing everything he needs on his estate, can kill another chief and seize his cattle without himself suffering damage. But if, with the development of industry, the same landlord sells his product to a neighbouring mine, and kills the miners, he cannot sell his product; or he goes without coal.

To the degree that we become dependent on the other, to that degree we are less able to exercise coercion over him. If we really need another we mustn't kill him; if we want to sell him our goods

we must let him earn money.¹ The development of the money and credit economy enormously increases this condition of interdependence. Not only does it weld us into one organism, it gives the organism sensory nerves by which damage to one part is apt almost immediately to be felt by the whole. The very nature of wealth itself changes ; and you finally reach a condition in which although it is possible to destroy another's wealth (if you are ready to suffer damage to your own) you cannot seize it.²

Now the essence of all that is extremely simple.

¹ In *The Great Illusion* I wrote :

"One could indeed generalise to the extent of indicating a social law or principle at work : to the degree to which the relations between individuals or groups involve the performance on either part of services that are difficult, requiring instruments of any sharpness, to that degree the ability of the one party to coerce the other diminishes. If you want a service performed by some one else, of such a kind that you have to put into his hands tools, knowledge, freedom of movement, you have given him something by which he will be able to resist any coercion which you may attempt.

"You may be able to get certain simple jobs like the cutting of sugarcane accomplished by the lash of the slave-driver's whip. You cannot get your appendix cut in that way. It is no good threatening the surgeon with the pains and penalties that you will visit upon him if he fail in his operation ; because if he fails, you will not have the power to visit upon him these penalties. You create there a situation in which you abandon coercion and come to bargain, discussion of, say, fees."

² In working out the financial reactions, I suggested that on the morrow of the next war there would be no indemnity commensurate with its cost, since such indemnity could only be paid by a great expansion of the vanquished nation's foreign trade which the victor would be in no temper to tolerate ; and which indeed by reason of the special circumstances of such payment would greatly disorganise his own trade. This part of the book was generally regarded as sheer lunacy, and not a single economist who deigned to criticise the thesis would accept the validity of this part.

The kind of facts obtainable from the morning's newspaper will give you most of the data necessary to establish its broad truth. We know from the morning's paper that as the result of our intricate division of labour (itself the result of improved communication) wealth *has* undergone a profound transformation in character. It now takes for the most part, and for most of us must take, money forms which mean dividends, profits, with an elaborate apparatus of banking and exchange. It is no longer things you can carry away as the Danes carried away cattle and goblets ; nor even estates that you can annex and occupy as the Normans annexed the estates of the English. One point of difference is that the Dane who carried off cattle, or the Norman who annexed an estate, himself ate the cattle or consumed the proceeds of the estates as the case may be. But if an English manufacturer should " capture " a linoleum factory in Germany he would not want to consume the linoleum himself ; he would want to sell it ; and to do that Germany must be flourishing and producing ; and even if he closed the factory or forbade the German to sell linoleums in his markets, then the conquered territory becomes valueless as a field of investments, valueless as a market for goods ; and he destroys those markets which depend upon Germany's power to purchase. (If the German linoleum manufacturer cannot sell his goods he cannot buy Indian jute ; and if the Indian cannot sell his jute he cannot buy British cutlery.) Again, funda-

mentally all that is exceedingly simple, and the facts are available to most of the John Smiths of the world.

Why has he so largely missed the significance of so plain a thing? Some progress, it is true, there has been—indeed in some respects the change has been remarkable. Speaking generally it would be regarded as an indecent and blasphemous thing to talk about the morally regenerative qualities of the war. We begin to realise that we do not “own” the territories we conquer (our popular newspapers agitated indeed against the retention of certain conquests); we have a general idea that, obviously in view of our situation after victory, “war does not pay”.

Yet it would seem that these beliefs are held precariously and confusedly and that some of the implications indispensable to the firm establishment of an international society are not grasped at all.

And in this respect American opinion lags behind even the British. There are quite a group of American writers who descant as gaily as ever in pre-war terms, about commercial wars, the part that military power plays in the struggle for trade and economic advantage. England and America are the new antagonists, commercial to-day, naval to-morrow. Some typical citations appear earlier in this chapter.

Which leads one to ask the simple question: What, after victory (assuming British victory), would Britain be able to do to America in the way

of stopping American competition or taking American trade that Britain, now victorious over Germany, has not been able to do to the latter country? And have the economic results of victory over Germany been so brilliant for Britain that this latter will be disposed to repeat the experience now with America?

It may be. Any folly is imaginable, given a sufficient disregard of the self-evident. But, again, what has "education" been up to that the thing should be possible?

One author, of quite respectable standing, ventured the assertion that Britain would fight to liberate herself from the toils of American debts. No one seemed to laugh; the book was quite seriously reviewed. Yet here are America and the Allied nations confronting a virtually disarmed state, that has been completely conquered, and she simply says she cannot pay. Well, what do we—Britain, France, America, her conquerors—propose to do about it? Have another war? Is it from any lack of power that we are unable to make her pay? The British do not need to go to war with America in order to repudiate their debts; they have simply to follow the example of Germany and say, "Sorry, we cannot pay." What could an America as highly armed as you like, with a navy twice her present navy, and we with our present navy cut in half if you will, do? If she could use her preponderant power to make a state that is insolvent pay vast sums, if there exist any means

whatsoever of doing that thing, why are they not employed against Germany? We have not hesitated to use force; France invaded the Ruhr. Did it bring payment any nearer?

The truth—quite evident, quite undeniable—is that we have given up the attempt to force payment by Germany; given up the attempt to “take” her wealth by invasions and seizures. We discuss now on the basis of agreement: What will she undertake to pay? What does she agree that she can pay? We carry, indeed, the thing to the degree of comedy and burlesque. The real process by which we—the “we” including here the Americans—have been securing payment, is by lending Germany the money with which to pay us. We shall probably continue the process.

And yet this simple truth, which the fact of the never-ending Reparation Commissions shouts at us, makes nonsense of nearly all the assumptions underlying these fear- and hate-engendering words about the need for “protecting our wealth from the covetous foreigner” that pass current at par, as one hundred per cent. valid.

“Financial enslavement to America,” says someone of the increasing “buying up” of England by America. Well, if Americans “buy up” England, presumably they will want to make it a paying investment. If these investments in power plants, and motor factories, and cinema palaces are to pay big dividends, English people must get a higher standard of life by using more power, buying more

cars, demanding more entertainment. And ultimately the dividends must be paid in goods or services. Would business men or the unemployed object ?

One of the curious features of the recent efforts to save Germany economically is the fact that American investors are so heavily committed in Germany that America cannot afford to see her collapse, are prepared to see the American Government lose the money due to it on debts, provided only that German prosperity can be restored.

But then of course Germany is America's—and Britain's—commercial rival, to be "fought" and "destroyed".

If one glance down the reports of (say) a Senate debate on a recent Cruiser Bill, the editorial comments that have accompanied its passage ; recalls similar debates in Parliament and corresponding editorial comments on this side, there emerge, like a Greek chorus, certain phrases implying certain assumptions. "Protection of our wealth and prosperity . . . riches like ours a temptation to the foreigner . . . increasing investments call for the sturdy arm of the policeman . . . commercial competition makes struggle inevitable . . . position to assert our right to our due share . . . power must be proportionate to what we have to defend from alien cupidity . . . a big stick is a better guarantee than paper promises . . . facts of power, not the windy words of pacifism . . . insurance . . ."

These phrases are the current coin of the dis-

cussion. They pass without question in the greatest deliberative assemblies of the world ; editors, writers, professors give unquestioning endorsement ; and because they pass unchallenged, they give rise to and justify the vague fears which lie at the heart of the animosities, resentments, pugnacities, which motivate the armament competitions. The foreigner may " take " our wealth, our country, unless we can protect it.

Why does the public thus miss the point ? Why does a perfectly simple proposition like that which *The Great Illusion* presented become overlaid with confusion ?

In a previous chapter a professor was quoted concerning the responsibility of professors for some of the mischief wrought by Nationalism. I am disposed to quote, but with some reservation, another professor upon the responsibility of professors (or rather should one say the professorial method ?) for some of the confusion of the public mind on the matters of public policy. The academic and professorial method tends so much to make the simple thing difficult rather than the difficult thing simple. Professor Schiller of Oxford writes :

The interest of the subject is to become more widely understood, and so more influential. The interest of the professor is to become more unassailable, and so more authoritative. He achieves this by becoming more technical. For the more technical he gets, the fewer can comprehend him ; the fewer there are competent

to criticise him, the more of an oracle he becomes ; if, therefore, he wishes for an easy life of undisturbed academic leisure, the more he will indulge his natural tendency to grow more technical as his knowledge grows, the more he will turn away from those aspects of his subject which have any practical or human interest. He will wrap himself in mysteries of technical jargon, and become as nearly as possible unintelligible. Truly, as William James once explained to me, apropos of the policy of certain philosophers, " the natural enemy of the subject is the professor thereof ! " It is clear that if these tendencies are allowed to prevail, every subject must in course of time become unteachable, and not worth learning.

And adds :

The present economic chaos in the world has been indirectly brought about by the policy adopted by the professors of economics forty or fifty years ago, to suit their own convenience. For they then decided that they must escape from the unwelcome attentions of the public by becoming more " scientific "—i.e. they ceased to express themselves in plain language, and took to mathematical formulæ and curves instead, with the result that the world promptly relapsed into primitive depths of economic ignorance.

Perhaps the professor might retort that it is not his job to be simple but to find out the truth, not always a simple matter. But assuredly it is the job of those who in our educational system are responsible for equipping the ordinary citizen for his task of citizenship to make the professor's truth under-

standable. And if I am recalling what is in part a piece of personal history in connection with the publication of the book here discussed, it is certainly not because personally I had any quarrel with the professors in the matter. The recognised "authorities" among the economists were often exceedingly generous in their verdicts on the book and much more discerning than the general public. My point rather is that if Smith's education for his social and civic task had been what it might be, there would never have been any need for such a book at all, and its "paradoxes" would have been commonplace.

Looking back on the quarter of a century of debate in which the publication of *The Great Illusion* involved its author, certain facts stand out. The book was addressed to a generation that had already evolved a very complex and very vulnerable society. The difficulties of direction and control were increasing daily. If we were not to run into deadlock and paralysis which might conceivably bring the whole thing to a stop—as the present breakdown threatens to do—it was vital to get away from national quarrels which had become out of date and irrelevant, and to get some understanding of the real issues which would shortly confront us. The book was at bottom a presentation of the case for co-operation as the obvious means of getting the best from Nature. It elaborated, in terms of world economics, what is, after all, the basis of all human

society : the assumption that it is better to combine to fight Nature than to fight each other. That thesis ought to be familiar to a generation that has evolved such complexity of co-operations. But not merely was the theme unfamiliar, I found there was no understanding of the commonplace facts necessary to explain it. Take one detail : the transformation which money and credit has wrought in the nature of wealth, and the bearing of that change on international relations. In dealing with international policy one must assume that John Smith will have some knowledge of the way in which, say, international payments are made ; of the nature of the money he handles. It is a piece of commonplace information indispensable to the understanding of what goes on around him. But I soon discovered in those discussions that the average man of our time has not the vaguest notion of such things as the mechanism of the international payments. Surely this indicates a strange gap in education.

We deem it necessary to let our scholars know about the structure of the earth, its movements round the sun, facts in geography, botany, zoology, something of the stories of kings and queens, snatches of dead languages, and much else, but in all that strange medley of information not one word, from the day that he enters school to the day he leaves, about the most indispensable, the most powerful and the most frequently used of all the devices of our daily lives : the money in our

pockets and in our banks, the thing about which—or about matters intimately related to it—we are all of us in some measure called upon to make vital and far-reaching decisions, decisions of public policy which affect enormously the distribution of wealth and the lives of millions. About that, we are, speaking broadly, taught nothing whatsoever. The thing which, of all things in human society, concerns us most insistently every day, almost every hour of our lives, and about which man has made some of his worst mistakes and developed his worst understandings—something which has grown into an elaborate system and around which our whole civilisation rotates—is something which our popular education completely neglects.¹

We have seen the post-war economic reconstruction of Europe held up for half a decade by the crassest ignorance of the most elementary economic truths. We see Europe to-day unable to achieve the degree of economic unity which is indispensable to the welfare of its dense populations, because its peoples everywhere are dominated by fallacies which have been exposed by economists a thousand times. We suffer perpetual difficulties of unemployment, commercial depressions, industrial maladjustments now in the coalfields, now in the cotton factories ; we face as a result movements for “nationalisation”, economic experimentation

¹ In his “Money Game” the author has made suggestions for simplifying the explanation of the most difficult side of economics, the monetary side, by the visual demonstration of the processes involved.

of all kinds ; proposals for the revolutionary overthrow of the whole system. Yet this is the one department of knowledge omitted from the education of all but a microscopic minority.

The contrast between the magnitude of the issues involved in this matter and the character of the knowledge brought to bear on their decisions is comic. And tragic.

Take another detail. The book appealed to a generation that prided itself above all else perhaps upon being "imperially minded", a generation which was urged daily to "think imperially", which had Empire Societies, Empire Days, Empire celebrations, Empire poets. But in fact it had no real understanding of the nature of the Empire and of the direction in which quite plainly its states were travelling. I made the astounding discovery that millions of Englishmen, perhaps most, really did believe that they "owned" Canada and other Dominions. When at the time of the Boer War,¹ in reply to Imperialists who were stressing the importance of "controlling great sources of gold production", I pointed out that almost certainly in a year or two the mines would pass altogether outside Britain's control, that in the future South African Dominion the Act of the British House of Commons would not run, the point simply did not bite. The fact that already at that date the Dominions had become in reality, particularly in so far as fiscal policy was concerned,

¹ See the author's *Patriotism under Three Flags*.

independent States, was not the fact which took hold of the popular mind.

It was the flag, the symbol, the name, not the reality which mattered. And round that symbol and name certain strong emotions gathered with an almost complete absence of understanding. The Empire Societies, the school text-books, the poets laureate, the oratory, quite plainly implied that the emotion was the all-important thing, that the understanding of the processes which were developing, the new situations which were growing up and the new problems which would soon face us—these mattered not at all. And yet that tendency to the independence of the constituent units so strong within our own Empire (and, parenthetically, so mischievous) was one expression of the new social forces which were to make the military struggles for which we were then preparing utterly futile.

But the most suggestive failure, whether of the public mind itself, of education in the training that mind (or else of the author in adapting the presentation of his case to it), is revealed by another aspect of this little piece of literary history.

The nature of the case which the book attempted to present, of the misconceptions which it attacked, has been indicated. It can hardly be questioned that the misconceptions were in fact very dangerous; that the outcome of the war has vindicated broadly the author's contentions; that the truth was an important truth. The subject was very widely discussed in several countries at

the time the book appeared, particularly by economists and students of political science. Some of that expert criticism was doubtless valid ; much of it in any case might have been useful. But the original proposition, and the expert discussion or correction of it, went for very nearly nothing so far as any widespread public enlightenment was concerned because it was all very nearly smothered in one strange, amazing confusion, which the public seemed to have generated spontaneously about the whole matter. If every point of valid criticism had been anticipated by the book, if every defect in the chain of argument had been remedied, it would have made very little difference to its ultimate fate as a factor in the development of public opinion.

For, by one of those incalculable hazards which enter so largely into the shaping of a popular opinion about a given subject, the public—the casual writer who makes references to a book he reads about, but has not read, the columnist, the gossip merchant, newspaper or other, whatever it is that makes public opinion in such cases—decided that the book was an attempt to prove that war had become impossible.

It is now nearly a quarter of a century since the book appeared. During fifteen years of that time there certainly never passed a week during which there did not fall into my hands, by one channel or another, some newspaper cutting making hilarious references to the man who wrote a book

“ to prove that war was impossible ”. The thing seemed to appeal irresistibly to the risibilities of journalists in two continents. Of recent years the baiting has dropped, but the fifteen years more or less during which it was maintained sufficed to divert any widespread public attention from what the book really did attempt to show, from any useful truth it might have held, to this utterly groundless jibe.

For of course there is not a line in the book, or any book which I have written, which says or suggests that war had become impossible. Its whole purpose was to show the appalling danger of the ideas which it attacked ; to show that those ideas, if maintained, *must* end in war ; that the folly and futility of a given policy were no guarantee that men would not follow it ; it repeats with a reiteration that sickened the writer that the futility of war will never of itself stop war ; that its futility will only be a deterrent to the degree that men realise its futility, and it stresses again and again the distinction that must be drawn between the facts and what men believe to be the facts.¹

The result was this : Of ten persons who at a dinner table or in the smoking-room happened to be discussing the prevention of war and happened to have heard of that book as a contribution to the problem, nine would tell you that it tried to show that war could never take place.

Nothing that I could do seemed to weaken the

¹ Incidentally most of the book was written while a war was raging.

vitality of that astonishing legend. I have written literally hundreds of denials¹; have been guilty of the vulgarity of offering a considerable sum of money to certain critics if they could find in any one of my books anywhere a single line to the effect that war was impossible. But all apparently to no purpose whatever.

The personal aspect does not concern the reader, but there is an aspect which does, since it helps to reveal some of the forces which make the correction of widespread error difficult; to show certain tendencies or deficiencies in the public mind which govern us.

The thousand or so writers and journalists who have repeated that jibe to the still further confusion of public thought on an important subject, had in their possession, if they would avail themselves of it, sufficient evidence to know that the statement

¹ I choose at hazard a typical pre-war letter (to the *Saturday Review*, March 8th, 1913):

"You are good enough to say that I am 'one of the very few advocates of peace at any price who is not altogether an ass.' And yet also you state that I have been on a mission 'to persuade the German people that war in the twentieth century is impossible'. If I had ever tried to teach anybody such sorry rubbish I should be altogether an unmitigated ass. I have never, of course, nor so far as I am aware, has anyone ever said that war was impossible. Personally, not only do I regard war as possible but extremely likely. What I have been preaching in Germany is that it is impossible for Germany to benefit by war, especially by a war against us; and that, of course, is quite a different matter."

An author not unnaturally reflects that had he been a grocer accused of adulterating his sugar he could secure heavy damages. A mere author trying to clear up dangerous fallacies and finding that sheer falsehood about his product has increased the difficulties of his task a hundredfold (to say nothing of pretty nearly ruining him financially) has no remedy at all.

they were repeating was almost certainly false. Here was an agitator concerned about peace. If he really thought that peace could not be broken, that war had become impossible, why should he disturb himself? He had merely to let things take their course and peace would be preserved. One wonders a little that they did not put the question : Is it likely that a man whose books have gone into a score of languages would spend his life trying to prevent something which he believed could not take place ?

And one wonders also whether these writers, in the course of their education, ever had it brought home to them with any insistence that our first instinctive reaction to an idea which will cause us to readjust our own ideas—always a troublesome and sometimes an unhappy business—is one of hostility ; that if we can seize upon something which will tend to show that the person who has the insufferable impudence to disagree with us is something near to a lunatic, we shall be greatly tempted so to do.

Again, it is because education has not made the skill that enables us to judge from internal evidence, and to discipline our instinctive reactions, a common skill, that misinterpretation and misunderstanding is so likely to be the welcome accorded to a new point of view. And yet, when we say that we face a race between chaos and education, we mean that the capacity to change our ideas is not keeping pace with our capacity to produce by mechani-

cal means changes which, if they are not to destroy us, *must* be accompanied by a change of ideas.

Perhaps the kind of accident of which that book was the victim might have happened, however the subject it discussed had been approached and presented.¹ Yet, nevertheless, the existence of that myth suggests the question whether an author, who professes to address that vague-minded entity we call the public, has himself adhered sufficiently to the principles here set forth.

I was careful, in the preparation of the case I desired to make, to get all relevant facts ; to go at length into such things as the influence of modern banking upon the foreign policy of States ; the history of the indemnity paid by France after the war of 1870 ; to investigate the financial position of the small and "unprotected" countries ; the extent to which confiscation had followed modern wars. . . . The line of country was at times unfamiliar and the work absorbed from first to last a good many years. But the fact which was to prove of more importance than all the facts so laboriously disinterred, in determining the final utility of the work, was a tendency in the public mind to slip into certain elementary and crude confusions ; and because I had not given sufficient weight perhaps to that one outstanding, known, almost self-evident truth, all the other facts so pain-

¹ The headline of a review in a popular paper asking "Is War Now Impossible ?" may have had something to do with starting the legend.

fully uncovered were to prove of very little avail in clearing away error, preventing mistakes, establishing truth.

I knew that to my generation war was something that "occurred", "happened", like the rain; not something which resulted from policies put into motion by the wills of men. I quite frequently used to get the question, "Do you think wars have stopped?" much as one might get the question, "Do you think the rain has stopped?" (to which I always gave the routine reply: "I have not the least idea. If you ask me whether men can make wars stop I have a very definite idea. As to whether they will, I have not the slightest").

The form of that question and its frequency should have warned me that the public—the "educated" quite as much as the "uneducated"—starting from the premise that war was a manifestation of nature like rain, must necessarily regard a Pacifist as one who believed that the rain would not come, that war would not take place. That a man could be a Pacifist precisely because he believed that war was extremely likely, was a phenomenon which I ought to have known would need careful, tiresome, repetitive explanation.

Though the point was stressed sometimes to the point of nausea, the whole approach should perhaps have been such as to make that particular misrepresentation impossible. Possibly the title—suggested by a line of Milton's about "this mighty illusion of the benefits of conquest"—may have

misled those who know books mainly by their title, into assuming that war, and not its advantages, was the illusion. However, it is easier to see how these things arise, than how to prevent them.

CHAPTER VIII

THE UNSEEN ASSASSIN OF JUSTICE

If the "biological" argument were completely true we might have to fight, because even the best arbitrator could not give the same bit of food to two people. Yet it has been commonly assumed that moral differences constitute the more intractable cause of war. We are usually quite certain that if we fight for a conviction, it must be a noble fight, a fight for the right. But at best it can only be a fight for our view of the right, more often our own view of our own rights, a fight to prevent another exercising that right which we claim : to be judge of the difference between us.

IT may or may not be true that a nation, dependent as is Britain upon an international economy, can only maintain its population at a civilised standard, if that economy rests upon some secure basis of international order and organisation ; and that we have reached a stage of the world's development in which we should set about consciously creating such an order.

But before the war one very common response, perhaps the commonest, to that proposal, was not to discuss its feasibility, but to display intense moral indignation at the suggestion that economic considerations should enter into international relationships, and so of the problem of war at all. The late Admiral Mahan said of the book discussed in the last chapter :

The fundamental proposition of the book is a mistake.

Nations are under no illusion as to the unprofitableness of war in itself. . . . The entire conception of the work is itself an illustration, based upon a profound misreading of human action. To regard the world as governed by self-interest only is to live in a non-existent world, an ideal world, a world possessed by an idea much less worthy than those which mankind, to do it bare justice, persistently entertains.¹

And the late Mr. Cecil Chesterton, in a passage characteristic of much criticism at that time, wrote :

His case, broadly stated, is that the net of " Finance "—or, to put it plainer, Cosmopolitan Usury—which is at present spread over Europe would be disastrously torn by any considerable war ; and that in consequence it is to the interests of the usurers to preserve peace. . . . But that only serves to raise the further question as to whether it is to the ultimate advantage of a nation to repose upon usury ; and whether the breaking of the net of usury which at present unquestionably holds Europe in captivity would not be for the advantage, as it would clearly be for the honour, of our race. . . . The sword is too sacred a thing to be prostituted to such dirty purposes. But whether he succeeds or fails in this attempt, it will make no difference to the mass of plain men who, when they fight and risk their lives, do not do so in the expectation of obtaining a certain interest on their capital, but for quite other reasons.

Such words as " offensive " and " sordid " were very commonly thrown at the book. Writers of the baser (but not least known) sort quite freely

¹ Admiral Mahan : *North American Review*, March, 1912.

attacked the author's personal character, of which they knew nothing. It is difficult perhaps for those of a post-war generation to realise that many Victorian and Edwardian moralists regarded war as desirable in itself, and even where they did not, often resented the introduction of economics into its discussion.¹

One of the most distinguished of all Englishmen of letters said in disparagement of *The Great Illusion*, "The only decent thing about war is that it does not pay."

This, remember, is in respect of a reply to the argument that war is "the struggle for bread", the fight for life; of a response to the invitation to consider the case, for instance, of a Germany who could not feed her children unless she captured further territory whereon to produce her food.

That "biological argument" is either broadly true or it is not. If it is, a man is placed in this dilemma: The food of the world being limited he must see that his children, the people of his own

¹ Professor William James has called attention to the characteristic with which I am dealing. Shortly before his death he wrote:

"Patriotic pride and ambition in their military form are, after all, only specifications of a more universal and enduring competitive passion. . . . Pacifism makes no converts from the military party. The military party denies neither the bestiality, nor the horror, nor the expense; it only says that these things tell but half the story. It only says that war is worth these things; that, taking human nature as a whole, war is its best protection against its weaker and more cowardly self, and that mankind cannot afford to adopt a peace economy. . . . This natural feeling forms, I think, the innermost soul of army writings. Without any exception to me, militarist authors take a highly mystical view of their subject, and regard war as a biological or sociological necessity. . . ." (*McClure's Magazine*, August, 1900.)

country, get their share, or allow foreigners and strangers to get more than their share. Assuming that he fights on behalf thus of justice for his children and his people, is his object "economic" or "moral"? Incidentally can a man die upon a battlefield from "selfishness"—unless he is quite unusually certain of his mansions in the skies?

Note what is involved in this implication that although it would be despicable to fight for food, to enable your nation's people to secure their fair share of the earth's resources, it is entirely noble to fight in order to impose your view of right upon another: that it is wrong to kill him in order that your people shall not starve; right to kill him because he disagrees with your views of right where he is concerned.

For that of course is what it comes to. To say that we would only fight to defend our view of right against attack by another, implies either that he is insincere in professing to disagree with our view of right, or that we fight him for claiming the same right we claim. It is a tribute perhaps to the sincerity, if not the perspicacity of men, that usually we are quite incapable of believing that our view of our rights can possibly be erroneous or challengeable; so much so that we habitually speak of "justice" as something about which there cannot be honest disagreement.

We imply, in our talk of "fighting for right" that the right must be visible to the other; if we did not, we should speak of fighting for our view

of what is right, and imposing it upon him. It is that almost self-evident truth—that what is fair and right in a given quarrel, what is justice, is precisely the thing about which men and nations do honestly differ—which we refuse to face.

For if we did face it, this result would follow : we should see that we were refusing to him what we claim for ourselves, the power to judge as between the two, and that the situation demanded, not emotional support to the impulse to kill him because he differed from us, but a new sense of the nature of justice as an adjustment ensuring equality of right for both.

If it be true, which it plainly must be, that we are not infallible in our judgment of what is right where we are involved, then this idea that we should always be ready to fight for our view, to kill men for not agreeing with that view, is an idea that becomes the assassin not merely of men, but of justice itself ; to say nothing of social order.

Looking over some pre-war papers I find the remains of a newspaper discussion with Mr. Cecil Chesterton on that point, arising out of the criticism just touched upon. Mr. Chesterton had said :

. . . I may perhaps be allowed to turn to civil conflicts to make clear my meaning. In this country during the last three centuries one solid thing has been done. The power of Parliament was pitted in battle against the power of the Crown, and won. As a result, for good or evil, Parliament really is stronger than the Crown to-day. The power of the mass of the people

to control Parliament has been given as far as mere legislation could give it. We all know that it is a sham. And if you ask what it is that makes the difference of reality between the two cases, it is this : that men killed and were killed for the one thing and not for the other.

. . . Men do judge, and always will judge, things by the ultimate test of how they fight. The German victory of forty years ago has produced not only an astonishing expansion, industrial as well as political, of Germany, but has (most disastrously, as I think) infected Europe with German ideas, especially with the idea that you make a nation strong by making its people behave like cattle. God send that I may live to see the day when victorious armies from Gaul shall shatter this illusion, burn up Prussianism with all its police regulations, insurance act, poll taxes, and insults to the poor, and reassert the Republic. It will never be done in any other way.

If arbitration is ever to take the place of war, it must be backed by a corresponding array of physical force. Now the question immediately arises : Are we prepared to arm any International Tribunal with any such powers? Personally, I am not. . . . Turn back some fifty years to the great struggle for the emancipation of Italy. Suppose that a Hague Tribunal had then been in existence, armed with coercive powers. The dispute between Austria and Sardinia must have been referred to that tribunal. That tribunal must have been guided by existing treaties. The Treaty of Vienna was perhaps the most authoritative ever entered into by European Powers. By that treaty, Venice and Lombardy were unquestionably assigned to Austria. A just tribunal administering international law *must* have decided in

favour of Austria, and have used the whole armed force of Europe to coerce Italy into submission. Are those Pacifists, who try at the same time to be Democrats, prepared to acquiesce in such a conclusion? Personally, I am not.

To which I replied :

Mr. Cecil Chesterton says that the question which I have raised is this : "Should usurers go to war?"

That, of course, is not true. I have never, even by implication, put such a problem, and there is nothing in the article which he criticises, nor in any other statement of my own, that justifies it. What I have asked is whether peoples should go to war.

I should have thought it was pretty obvious that, whatever happens, usurers do not go to war : the peoples go to war, and the peoples pay, and the whole question is whether they should go on making war and paying for it. Mr. Chesterton says that if they are wise they will ; I say that if they are wise they will not.

I have attempted to show that the prosperity of peoples—by which, of course, one means the diminution of poverty, better houses, soap and water, healthy children, lives prolonged, conditions sufficiently good to ensure leisure and family affection, fuller and completer lives generally—is not secured by fighting one another, but by co-operation and labour, by a better organisation of society, by improved human relationship, which,

of course, can only come of better understanding of the conditions of that relationship, which better understanding means discussion, adjustment, a desire and capacity to see the point of view of the other man—of all of which war and its philosophy is the negation.

To all this Mr. Chesterton replies : “ That only concerns the Jews and the moneylenders.” Again, this is not true. It concerns all of us, like all problems of our struggle with Nature. It is in part at least an economic problem, and that part of it is best stated in the more exact and precise terms that I have employed to deal with it—the terms of the market-place. But to imply that the conditions that there obtain are the affair merely of bankers and financiers, to imply that these things do not touch the lives of the mass, is simply to talk a nonsense the meaninglessness of which only escapes some of us because in these matters we happen to be very ignorant. It is not mainly usurers who suffer from bad finance and bad economics (one may suggest that they are not quite so simple) ; it is mainly the people as a whole.

Mr. Chesterton says that we should break this “ net of usury ” in which the peoples are enmeshed. I agree heartily ; but that net has been woven mainly by war (and that diversion of energy and attention from social management which war involves), and is, so far as the debts of the European States are concerned (so large an element of usury), almost solely the outcome of war. And if the

peoples go on piling up debt, as they must if they are to go on piling up armaments (as Mr. Chesterton wants them to), giving the best of their attention and emotion to sheer physical conflict, instead of to organisation and understanding, they will merely weave that web of debt and usury still closer ; it will load us more heavily and strangle us to a still greater extent. If usury is the enemy, the remedy is to fight usury. Mr. Chesterton says the remedy is for its victims to fight one another.

And you will not fight usury by hanging Rothschilds, for usury is worst where that sort of thing is resorted to. Widespread debt is the outcome of bad management and incompetence, economic or social, and only better management will remedy it. Mr. Chesterton is sure that better management is only arrived at by "killing and being killed". He really does urge this method even in civil matters. (He tells us that the power of Parliament over the Crown is real, and that of the people over Parliament a sham, "because men killed and were killed for the one, and not for the other".) It is the method of Spanish America where it is applied more frankly and logically, and where still, in many places, elections are a military affair, the questions at issue being settled by killing and being killed, instead of by the cowardly, pacifist methods current in Europe. The result gives us the really military civilisations of Venezuela, Colombia, Nicaragua, and Paraguay. And, although the English system may have many defects—I think it has—those

defects exist in a still greater degree where force "settles" the matters in dispute, where the bullet replaces the ballot, and where bayonets are resorted to instead of brains. For Devonshire is better than Nicaragua. Really it is. And it would get us out of none of our troubles for one group to impose its views simply by preponderant physical force, for Mr. Asquith, for instance, in the true Castro or Zuyala manner, to announce that henceforth all critics of the Insurance Act are to be shot, and that the present Cabinet will hold office as long as it can depend upon the support of the Army. For, even if the country rose in rebellion, and fought it out and won, the successful party would (if they also believed in force) do exactly the same thing to *their* opponents; and so it would go on never-endingly (as it has gone on during weary centuries throughout the larger part of South America), until the two parties came once more to their senses and agreed not to use force when they happened to be able to do so; which is our present condition. But it is the condition of England merely because the English, as a whole, have ceased to believe in Mr. Chesterton's principles; it is not yet the condition of Venezuela because the Venezuelans have not yet ceased to believe those principles, though even they are beginning to.

Mr. Chesterton says: "Men do judge, and always will judge, by the ultimate test of how they fight." Therefore, the pirate who gives his blood

has a better right to the ship than the merchant (who may be a usurer !) who only gives his money. Well, that is the view which was all but universal well into the period of what, for want of a better word, we call civilisation. Not only was it the basis of all such institutions as the ordeal and duel ; not only did it justify (and in the opinion of some still justifies) the wars of religion and the use of force in religious matters generally ; not only was it the accepted national policy of such communities as the Vikings, the Barbary States, and the Red Indians ; but it is still, unfortunately, the policy of certain European states. But the ideal is a survival and—and this is the important point—an admission of failure to understand where right lies : to “ fight it out ” is the remedy of the boy who for the life of him cannot see who is right and who is wrong.

At ten years of age we are all quite sure that piracy is a finer calling than trade, and the pirate a finer fellow than the Shylock who owns the ship—which, indeed, he may well be. But as we grow up (which some of the best of us never do) we realise that piracy is not the best way to establish the ownership of cargoes, any more than the ordeal is the way to settle cases at law, or the rack of proving a dogma, or the Spanish-American method the way to settle differences between Liberals and Conservatives.

And just as civil adjustments are made most efficiently, as they are in England (say), as distinct

from South America, by a general agreement not to resort to force, so the English method in the international field gives better results than that based on force. The relationship of Great Britain to Canada or Australia is preferable to the relationship of Russia to Finland or Poland, or Germany to Alsace-Lorraine. The five nations of the British Empire have, by agreement, abandoned the use of force as between themselves. Australia may do us an injury—exclude our subjects, English or Indian, and expose them to insult—but we know very well that force will not be used against her. To withhold such force is the basis of the relationship of these five nations ; and, given a corresponding development of ideas, might equally well be the basis of the relationship of fifteen—about all the nations of the world who could possibly fight. The difficulties Mr. Chesterton imagines—an international tribunal deciding in favour of Austria concerning the recession of Venice and Lombardy, and summoning the forces of United Europe to coerce Italy into submission—are, of course, based on the assumption that a United Europe, having arrived at such understanding as to be able to sink its differences, would be the same kind of Europe that it is now, or was a generation ago. If European statecraft advances sufficiently to surrender the use of force against neighbouring states, it will have advanced sufficiently to surrender the use of force against unwilling provinces, as in some measure British statesmanship has already done. To raise

the difficulty that Mr. Chesterton does is much the same as assuming that a court of law in San Domingo or Turkey will give the same results as a court of law in Great Britain, because the form of the mechanism is the same. And does Mr. Chesterton suggest that the war system settles these matters to perfection? That it has worked satisfactorily in Ireland and Finland, or, for the matter of that, in Albania or Macedonia?

It is perfectly true that "killing and being killed" as the display of virile and vivid action has a deep-set though generally unavowed attraction for most of us (unless we happen to be the direct victims of it), even when it is unscrupulous, ruthless, piratical. Almost all epic poetry, all literature, all adventure reflects it. To understand the real natural history of the various philosophies of power—whether in national or international politics, whether of Junkerdom in Germany, of Czarism in Russia, of Tory feudalism in domestic affairs, or of Prussian Nietzscheanism, of French Napoleonism, or of British Imperialism in the international field—one must take into account these elemental instincts as motives. Speaking broadly, it is the craving to indulge these instincts of pride of place and power over other men, to get away from the social restraints which the needs of a society based on arrangement and contract impose on the more primeval instincts, that constitutes the most fundamental and powerful of the temperamental obstacles to the creation of an international society. In any struggle to

dominate another, whether it be an individual or a group, all the primeval instincts are assets ; in the working of a society based on equality and co-operation they have to be held in restraint. In the first case the more riotously we hate our enemy and refuse to listen to him the better ; in the second case it is part of the social bargain that we shall sometimes yield to him, even though we believe him to be wrong. It is restraint and self-conquest which, with those who have the elemental instincts less under control, is so distasteful and irksome. They do not desire a country governed by arrangement, agreement and discussion—a regime in which their passion for dominations is continually checked and circumscribed. They have a feeling that a society ruled by law is a society ruled by lawyers, by talk instead of by valour and manly strength. As little do they desire a Europe or a world which they can only share and not dominate. And thus, though this type of character often shows great courage, it does not show toleration and understanding of an opponent ; those who embody it will often show a high sense of duty, they will seldom surrender a position of domination. A society based on equality and co-operation involves a highly developed social discipline, a late acquisition of mankind ; a society grounded on force and buttressed by group loyalty depends much more upon simple instincts and much less upon mental complexities. The social instinct which prompts one unit of a society to say, “ I do not ask to

dominate you because I would not tolerate that you should dominate me ; let our relationship be not one of conqueror and conquered, but of partnership," is alien to this type of character. Rather does it take the line : " One of us must dominate ; we shall fight it out."

The two categories are not, of course, watertight compartments. You may get Jingo Socialists and Pacifist Tories. So, historically even when a certain degree of law had been established in the society of individuals, human conceptions could not altogether rid themselves of the view that might and valour played some part in all judgments, and for very long we had trial by battle or the ordeal ; we had the combats of chivalry, the duel, and other customs in which this instinct had free play.

If Mr. Chesterton urges that killing and being killed is the way to determine the best means of governing a country, it is his business in the matter of the Balkan War to which he refers to defend the Turk, who has adopted that principle during four hundred years, not the Christians, who want to bring that method to an end and adopt another. And I would ask no better example of the utter failure of the principles that I combat and Mr. Chesterton defends than their failure in the Balkan Peninsula.

That war was due to the vile character of Turkish rule, and the Turk's rule is vile because it is based on the sword. Like Mr. Chesterton (and our

pirate), the Turk believes in the right of conquest, "the ultimate test of how they fight". "The history of the Turks", says Sir Charles Elliott, "is almost exclusively a catalogue of battles." He has lived (for the most gloriously uneconomic person has to live, to follow a trade of some sort, even if it be that of theft) on tribute exacted from the Christian populations, and extorted, not in return for any work of administration, but simply because he was the stronger. And that has made his rule intolerable, and was the cause of that war.

Now, my whole thesis is that understanding, work, co-operation, adjustment, must be the basis of human society; that conquest as a means of achieving national advantage must fail; that to base your prosperity or means of livelihood, your economic system, in short, upon having more force than someone else, and exercising it against him, is an impossible form of human relationship that is bound to break down. And Mr. Chesterton says that the war in the Balkans demolishes this thesis. I do not agree with him.

That war in the Balkans was an attempt—and happily a successful one—to bring this reign of force and conquest to an end, and that is why those of us who do not believe in military force rejoice.

The debater, more concerned with verbal consistency than realities and the establishment of sound principles, will say that this means the approval of war. It does not; it merely means the choice of

the less evil of two forms of war. War has been going on in the Balkans, not for a month, but has been waged by the Turks daily against these populations for 400 years.

The Balkan peoples have now brought to an end a system of rule based simply upon the accident of force—"killing and being killed". And whether good or ill comes of this war will depend upon whether they set up a similar system or one more in consonance with Pacifist principles. But if they are guided by Mr. Chesterton's principle, if each one of the Balkan nations is determined to impose its own especial point of view, to refuse all settlement by co-operation and understanding, where it can resort to force—why, in that case, the strongest (presumably Bulgaria) will start conquering the rest start imposing government by force, and will listen to no discussion or argument; will simply, in short, take the place of the Turk in the matter, and the old weary contest will begin afresh, and we shall have the Turkish system under a new name, until that in its turn is destroyed, and the whole process begun again *da capo*. And if Mr. Chesterton says that this is not his philosophy, and that he would recommend the Balkan nations to come to an understanding, and co-operate together, instead of fighting one another, why does he give different counsels to the nations of Christendom as a whole? If it is well for the Balkan peoples to abandon conflict as between themselves in favour of co-operation against the common enemy, why is it ill for the

other Christian peoples to abandon such conflict in favour of co-operation against their common enemy, which is wild nature and human error, ignorance and passion.

CHAPTER IX

THE MOST UNSEEN OF ALL

Why are our impulses so often socially destructive? Man is not at bottom a bad fellow. But he prefers to be a master to being a partner; and if two are associated in a common task they cannot both be masters. The bearing of this lust for power upon the economic motive and the understanding of economic and social processes. A summary of common errors, a retrospect and prospect.

WE come to the ultimate question of all. *Why* do men refuse to see the visible, to reject co-operation, defy justice, in order to impose their will by coercion?

The previous pages have either directly or by implication criticised educational method for inadequately developing the particular skill necessary to enable us to draw sound conclusions from familiar facts in the formulation of our social policies. The implication is that instinct has at times to be guided or disciplined by a social intelligence. But *why* is that necessary? Why does not the moment-to-moment instinct, as with the animals, suffice? It is true that our society is more complex than animal society (more complex even than the wonderful society of the hive). But why should instinct so often work against the social arrangement?

Any full discussion of that would carry us deep into regions of bio-psychology, an examination of

the survival value in earlier phases of human association of instincts which in later phases lose that value and become anti-social, out of date—things beyond the province of this book. What I have been trying to indicate here is that conscious intelligence could make a better hand of managing those instincts (not by suppression, but by guidance based upon foreknowledge of what is going to result) if native intelligence were educated to that end.

An earlier chapter of this book tried to show that instinct had an anti-social direction often simply because intelligence failed to see the facts ; that the direction taken depended in large measure upon what we did with the facts by our intellect. There may be, for instance, such a thing as a herd instinct which causes us to be suspicious of other herds. But what makes the herd in our mind—yesterday a religious group, to-day a nation, to-morrow an economic class—depends upon an intellectual process. As insisted upon in that earlier chapter, the impulse to fight may be part of our nature,¹

¹ Though modern anthropology seems to be returning more and more to the "golden age" theory of early man. Professor G. Elliot Smith, F.R.S., writes :

"Natural Man is revealed to us as a merry and good-natured fellow, honest and considerate, chaste and peaceful, with a rich imagination and a fine sense of pictorial art and craftsmanship. Yet he displays no innate desire to make houses or clothes, to till the soil, or to domesticate animals. He has no social organisation apart from the family, and no hereditary chiefs. He has no property, and all the food he collects belongs to the family group. He is monogamous. He is a naked, harmless, truthful, overgrown child, kind-hearted, but quick and able to defend himself and to stop quarrelling among his fellows." (*Human Nature*, Watts & Co., p. 30.)

but what we fight about is certainly part of our nurture. Thus there is nothing inevitable in the worst cruelties that mark man's tempers, since the thing we rejoiced in yesterday (cannibalism, human sacrifice, polygamy, torture) horrifies us to-day. We have not changed biologically as quickly as all that. It is our outlook that has changed, the way we see things ; the effect of suggestibility in the creation of new likes and dislikes has come into play.

But if we are to avoid these reefs we must be aware of their existence. To pretend there are no reefs puts the ship in deadly danger. To pretend that the voice of the people is the voice of God in the sense that the people are always right, is the worst possible treason to democracy. There may be hope for us if we face frankly the fact that at times the voice of the people is the voice of Satan.

In his essays on religion Clutton-Brock writes :

When we can explain the baser, sillier part of ourselves, then it begins to lose its power over us. . . . We are fools, no doubt, but we wish not to be fools ; it is possible for us to perceive our folly, to discern the causes of it, and by that very discernment to detach ourselves from it, to make it no longer a part of our minds, but something from which they have suffered and begin to recover. Then it is as though we had stimulated our own mental phagocytes against bacilli that have infected the mind from the outside ; we no longer submit ourselves to the disease as if it were health ; but, knowing it to be disease, we begin to recover from it.

That is why I have come to feel that history should take largely an anthropological form, as the story of man's shortcomings told in such a way that we may get a vivid sense that "That is the sort of animal we are and may once more become unless we watch ourselves and manage to penetrate the errors which led to those horrors".

Psychology has become, like philosophy, economics and other social sciences, a terrifyingly complicated study, and needs bringing into the street by some method of simplification.

The impulses which are most dangerous, those we need most to be upon our guard against, are visible enough, and sometimes their explanation is evident enough. One tendency stands out above all others in the problems which we have been considering. It is the greatest obstacle of all, ultimately, to the establishment of co-operation in the field where it is now most needed, between nations.

The outstanding characteristic I have in mind may be related closely to what one school of psychologists have termed "the masculine protest," the instinct or desire for power, for being in a position to impose our will upon the other party in any operation that we may have to undertake together. Never do we exchange the position of master for that of partner so long as we feel that we can maintain the mastership and achieve what we want by it.

The preference for mastership is obvious ; there

enter motives which are less obvious. If we are masters we do not have to discuss, persuade, debate, adjust, restrain impatience, as we do when we are merely equal partners ; we have only to command. Adjustment, consideration of the other's point of view, involves a type of mental activity which biologically is the last quality we acquire ; we were instinctive animals for unmeasured ages before we were thinkers. We are not yet quite accustomed to thought, and dislike many of its concomitants, one of which is doubt. We thirst for certitudes because doubt involves more of that unaccustomed, unhealthy occupation of thought ; a check to emotions since we have not yet decided which is the wrong and which the right, which to love, which to hate.¹

To have a settled opinion disturbed, pulls up our moorings ; we have to start all over again. And so we hate the man who disturbs those settled opinions. If you don't believe it, watch your feelings the next time someone proves to you that the theory you have so carefully cultivated in the garden of your mind, watering and weeding it, is rubbish ; note how you feel when he tramples on it ruthlessly. He has done you a service ; put you on the track of truth. Are you *really* grateful ? Or do you want to slap him ?

¹ Once I took a niece aged seven to the cinema. We came in when a thrilling drama was half-way through. Men were being pinioned and belaboured, and after watching a few moments my guest said in tones of agony : " Do tell me whether these are the good men or the bad men. I cannot go on any longer not knowing whether to be glad or sorry."

As individuals we have learned to restrain this impulse to impose our will. Society has developed another and countervailing desire : a desire not to be caddish, not to humiliate others by parading our superior strength, or wealth, or virtue. But as a nation we permit ourselves lusts and orgies we should never dream of as individuals. The brag which every nationalist indulges about his country—its might, its glory, its wealth, power, virtue beyond all others, its right to be “above all others”, to display an egoism that becomes “sacred”; to assert its claims “right or wrong”—all this savagery and immoralism expressed in the attitude of an individual would banish him from decent society. Expressed on behalf of a national herd it is merely patriotism. “Rule, Britannia” is a little out of fashion just now. But yesterday we really did sing :

And thine shall be the subject main,
And every shore it circles thine,
. . . Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
More dreadful from each foreign stroke.

Every nation has songs like that. The patriotism they express is an outlet for savagery not elsewhere permitted.

It is probably on this rock of the desire for domination and mastery that mankind first went wrong, if we accept the Golden Age theory of primitive man. Professor G. Elliot Smith, who is the great modern protagonist of that theory, writes :

It becomes abundantly clear that the introduction of a class system and chieftainship was mainly responsible for the trouble. . . .

Cruelty and quarrelsomeness are not due to innate qualities, but are awakened in alert and quick-witted people, who were by nature not malicious, by artificial beliefs and violent practices devised by their fellows.

There are reasons for believing that men were, on the whole, peaceful and happy until the device of agriculture which Mr. Perry calls "food production" (in contradistinction to the Golden Age of "food gathering") began. For the custom of tilling the soil brought many things in its train, good and bad. It created the assurance of a food supply and a really settled mode of life, and the need (and the opportunity for satisfying it) for many arts and crafts—houses to store grain, pots for holding and cooking grain, works of irrigation for cultivating barley, and eventually the emergence of a leader to organise the community's labour and the equable distribution of water for irrigation. Weaving, the use of clothing, amulets, jewellery, the arts of the carpenter, the stonemason, the boat-builder, to mention only a few, created a division of labour, and contributed to the emergence of classes, which still further emphasised the position of the irrigation-engineer, who became the first of a dynasty of hereditary kings, the regulators of irrigation and the astronomers, who controlled their people's destiny. For the celestial phenomena they interpreted and, so to speak, made their own were regarded not merely as the measures of time and the controllers of the waters of irrigation, but also as the forces that controlled the lives of, and the processes of life-giving in, men themselves. These were the sort of circumstances that put the labour of the community

at the service of one man, and conferred supernatural powers on him. Thus were created the social inequalities and the material factors that excited greed, envy, and jealousy. Out of such events emerged the social organisation that regulated marriage and provoked quarrelling and malicious violence. By putting power into the hands of a ruler, this train of events made it possible for him not only to use the labour of the community for his own purposes, but also to exercise the power of life and death over his subjects.¹

Well, how does this apply to the better understanding of economic and social processes? We cannot well abandon the cultivation of the soil as the solution of some of the difficulties which have arisen out of the organisation of its cultivation.

In a more than usually penetrating criticism of *The Great Illusion* Mr. R. G. Hawtry raises an objection which touches on this point of power for itself.

After expressing agreement in a very large measure both with the truth and the need of the argument of the book, he enters this caveat :

The economic ambitions of states are to be expressed in terms of power. We are accustomed to think of economic ends in terms of welfare, but in matters of public policy that is never the whole story. To each country power appears as the indispensable means to every end. It comes to be exalted into an end itself.

So long as welfare is the end, different communities may co-operate happily together. Jealousy there may

¹ *Human Nature* (Watts & Co., London), p. 33.

be, and disputes as to how the material means of welfare should be shared. But there is no inherent divergence of aim in the pursuit of welfare. Power, on the other hand, is relative. The gain of one country is necessarily loss to others ; its loss is gain to them. Conflict is the essence of pursuit of power.

If it has constantly been an aim of public policy to use the authority of the State to favour the activities of those who undertake economic development, even to the extent of acquiring undeveloped territory as a field for their activities, and possibly risking war in the process, that is because this policy has been believed to further the power of the State.

So long as international relations are based on force, power will be the leading object of national ambition. There results a vicious circle. When a political leader says that war is necessary in his country's vital interests, what he usually means is that war is necessary to acquire or to avoid losing some factor of national strength. The interest is only vital in the sense that it is vital to success in war. The only end vital enough to justify war is something arising out of the prospect of war itself.¹

I see no reason to differ from that. It brings us to the question : What is power for ? Who should exercise it ? To what ends and in what way ? What form of it may help society, what form damage or destroy it ? Who is " society " ? Are its frontiers those of the nation ?

When we see clearly the answer to those questions—some of the answers have been suggested in these

¹ *Economic Aspects of Sovereignty* (King & Co., London).

pages—we may be nearer to managing this primeval impulse. As indicating the relation of the propositions maintained in *The Great Illusion* to the “power impulse” and as indicating also what is in fact the reply to Mr. Hawtry, the following paragraph from an earlier book of mine may be reproduced :

“The central conclusion suggested by the analysis of the events of the past few years is that, underlying the disruptive processes so evidently at work—especially in the international field—is the deep-rooted instinct to the assertion of domination, preponderant power. This impulse, sanctioned and strengthened by prevailing traditions of ‘mystic’ patriotism, has been unguided and unchecked by any adequate realisation either of its anti-social quality, the destructiveness inseparable from its operation or its ineffectiveness to ends indispensable to civilisation.

“The psychological roots of the impulse are so deep that we shall continue to yield to it until we realise more fully its danger and inadequacy to certain vital ends like sustenance for our people, and come to see that if civilisation is to be carried on we must turn to other motives. We may then develop a new political tradition, which will ‘discipline’ instinct, as the tradition of toleration disciplined religious fanaticism when that passion threatened to shatter European society.

“Herein lies the importance of demonstrating the economic futility of military power. While it may

be true that conscious economic motives enter very little into the struggle of nations, and are a very small part of the passions of patriotism and nationalism, it is by a realisation of the economic truth regarding the indispensable condition of adequate life that those passions will be checked, or redirected and civilised.

"This does not mean that economic considerations should dominate life, but rather the contrary—that those considerations will dominate it if the economic truth is neglected. A people that starves is a people thinking only of material things—food. The way to dispose of economic preoccupations is to solve the economic problem."¹

Once before the war I attempted for a class of students, as a sort of "grammar" of the discussion of war and peace, to classify the main categories into which the fallacies that produce war could be grouped. That classification was as follows :

1. Those arising out of a crudely fatalistic view of politics : the assumption that it is no use trying to correct false ideas, because men are not responsible for their ideas and because their "fighting instincts" render war "inevitable" ; or that man's conduct is not influenced by his ideas since he is not guided by "logic" ; that war is not, like law or churches, or other human institution, the result of human effort and opinion, good and bad, but is imposed by outside forces which men cannot control.

2. Those due to what has been called the One-sides

¹ *The Fruits of Victory*, p. vii.

Aberration—i.e. the failure to realise that in all matters connected with the relations between men the action of one party makes only half the operation, and that we must necessarily misunderstand the operation as a whole unless we think of the acts of the two parties together, as that defence necessarily implies attack, sale purchase, inferior superior ; that to annex a province and its inhabitants is not to annex wealth, since the inhabitants own the wealth ; the tendency to consider a problem of two parties—war—in terms of one, as when we are told that the way for a nation to be sure of peace is to be stronger than its enemy, an “axiom” which stated, in the terms of two parties, amounts to saying that for two nations to keep peace each must be stronger than the other.

3. Those arising out of misconceptions as to the nature of government and the place of political authority in the modern world, as that one country can “own” another—owing to the source of its raw material, although Englishmen would no more own cotton fields of Louisiana by annexing that State than they now own the wheat fields of Canada ; or when we assume nations to be trading corporations, or economic or intellectual units that can be controlled or “removed” by military power or other similar units.

Perhaps that classification still holds. It is difficult to know just how far public opinion has travelled during the last quarter of a century. We are less fatalistic about society than we used to be, but are still perhaps as ready as ever to violate, in complete good faith, its most necessary principles.

Because we go wrong mainly in certain of the simpler and broader issues of human relationship, this book attempts to disentangle from the complex mass of facts in the international situation those "sovereign ideas" which constitute the crises, the basic factors of public action and opinion. In so doing there may have been some over-simplification. That will not greatly matter, if the result is some re-examination and clarification of the predominant belief that has been analysed. "Truth comes out of the error more easily than out of confusion," as Bacon warned us. It is easier to correct a working hypothesis of society, which is wrong in some detail, than to achieve wise conduct in society without any social principle. If social or political phenomena are for us just an unexplained tangle of forces, and we live morally from hand to mouth, by opinions which have no guiding principle, our emotions will be at the mercy first of one isolated fact or incident and then of another.

A certain parallel has more than once been suggested in these pages. European society is to-day threatened with disintegration as the result of ideas and emotions that have collected round patriotism. A century or two since it was threatened by ideas and passions which gathered round religious dogma.

If to-day, for the most part, in Europe and America one sect can live beside another in peace, where a century or two ago there would have been fierce hatreds, wars, massacres, and burnings, it is

not because the modern population is more learned in theology (it is probably less so), but rather conversely, because theological theory gave place to lay judgment in the ordinary facts of life.

If we have a vast change in the general ideas of Europe in the religious sphere, in the attitude of men to dogma, in the importance which they attach to it, in their feeling about it—a change which for good or evil is a vast one in its consequences, a moral and intellectual revulsion which has swept away one great difficulty of human relationship and transformed society—it is because the laity have brought the discussion back to principles so broad and fundamental that the data became the facts of human life and experience—data with which the common man is as familiar as the scholar. Of the present-day millions for whom certain beliefs of the older theologians would be morally monstrous, how many have been influenced by elaborate study concerning the validity of this or that text? The texts simply do not weigh with them, though for centuries they were the only things that counted. What do weigh with them are profounder and simpler things—a sense of justice, compassion—things which would equally have led the men of the sixteenth century to question the texts and the premises of the Church, if discussion had been free. It is because it was not free that the social instinct of the mass, the general capacity to order their relations so as to make it possible for them to live together, became distorted and vitiated. And the

wars of religion resulted. To correct this vitiation, to abolish these disastrous hates and misconceptions, elaborate learning was not needed. Indeed it was largely elaborate learning which had occasioned them. The judges who burned women alive for witchcraft, or inquisitors who sanctioned that punishment for heresy, had vast and terrible stores of learning. What was needed was that these learned folk should question their premises in the light of facts of common knowledge. It is by so doing that their errors are patent to the quite unlearned of our time.

The service which extricated us from the intellectual and moral confusion that resulted in such catastrophes in the field of religion, is needed in the field of politics. From certain learned folk—writers, poets, professors (not alone German), journalists, historians, and rulers—the public have taken a group of ideas concerning Patriotism, Nationalism, Imperialism, the nature of our obligation to the State, and so on, ideas which may be right or wrong, but which, we are all agreed, will have to be very much changed if men are ever to live together in peace and freedom ; just as certain notions concerning the institution of private property will have to be changed if the mass of men are to live in plenty.

It is a commonplace of militarist argument that so long as men feel as they do about their Fatherland, about patriotism and nationalism, internationalism will be an impossibility. If that is true—and I think it is—peace and freedom and

welfare will wait until those large issues have been raised in men's minds with sufficient vividness to bring about a change of idea and so a change of feeling with reference to them.

It is unlikely, to say the least, that the mass of Englishmen or Frenchmen will ever be in possession of detailed knowledge sufficient to equip them to pass judgment on the various rival solutions of the complex problems that face us, in the Balkans. And yet it was immediately out of a problem of Balkan politics that the war arose, and future wars may well arise out of those same problems if they are settled as badly in the future as in the past.

The situation would indeed be hopeless if the nature of human relationships depended upon the possession by the people as a whole of expert knowledge in complex questions of that kind. But happily the Sarajevo murders would not have developed into a war involving twenty nations but for the fact that there had been cultivated in Europe suspicions, hatreds, insane passions, and cupidities, due largely to false conceptions (though in part also themselves prompting the false conceptions) of a few simple facts in political relationships ; relationship concerning the necessary rivalry of nations, the idea that what one nation gains another loses, that States are doomed by a fate over which they have no control to struggle together for the space and opportunities of a limited world. But for the atmosphere that these ideas create (as false theological notions once created a similar atmosphere

between rival religious groups) most of these at present difficult and insoluble problems of nationality and frontiers and government, would have solved themselves.

PART II

A BOOK OF CASES

CHAPTER I

THE EMPIRE AND WORLD SOCIETY¹

The mischief wrought alike within the Empire and without by certain false assumptions of the rightness or moral value of absolute independence as an attribute of the "self-determination" of nationalities. In a world which needs above all integration there is an obligation on the part of those who form part of any social organisation which may have arisen out of the stresses of history not to break that tie. Even aliens have rights. Some notes on the Indian problem and the trouble created by the intolerable "superiority complex" of an older type of British official. The case of Palestine. Is that famous British gift for government declining?

WE are engaged in the discussion of projects for the economic unification of the Empire ; for rendering it economically self-sufficient ; for keeping its trade for its people. The advocates of what one may term the "New Imperialism" desire to reverse the trend of Imperial policy which was so strong in the nineteenth century, and to go back to earlier forms of Imperially restricted trade.

¹ The earlier part of this chapter is from an address delivered in 1930. The remaining chapters of this Part consist of notes upon certain outstanding events in international politics of the last few years, made at the time, and now so selected as to illustrate the general principles enumerated in Part I of this book.

We are also engaged in the task of trying to create institutions of an International Society in order to avoid such catastrophes as those of fifteen years since. What will be the bearing of the one effort upon the other?

Note, first, the place which the very abstract idea of nationalism has played this last hundred years in the fate alike of Europe and the Empire—an idea so abstract that no one has ever been able to define what a nation is. And yet it is this idea, the feeling of being a nation and our notions as to the attributes that ought to attach to it, which has more than any other single thing whatsoever determined the kind of world society and the kind of Empire in which we live. And this idea of nationalism is, historically speaking, quite a new idea; there is nothing in the nature of the universe or of man which made it inevitable, because for thousands of years man lived in an organised society in which it did not exist. It may not be the politician's business to examine such ideas—although he usually makes it his business to exploit them—but it is the business of those who make the politician to know something of the nature of the motives they are obeying, we who are the victims of the policies which those motives engender.

Secondly, note some of the forces which have transformed the character of the British Empire during the last seventy or eighty years.

We were led in the nineteenth century to an economic separatism which we are now trying to go back upon. Why did the British Empire cease to be an Empire properly speaking, and resolve itself, in large part, into a loose alliance of practically independent States? Why did the mother country surrender the economic privileges of an Imperial position in according fiscal autonomy to its daughter States? No empire in the

past has done this. Spain did not, nor Portugal, nor Holland.

The evolution, alike on its political and economic sides, has exceedingly interesting and significant aspects. If we cut beneath words and symbols to the underlying reality we see that there has taken place, what we have been assured again and again by students of politics never could take place—changes of frontier without war. Communities, originally part of an Empire, have achieved separate political status in no way subordinate to that of the State of which originally they were part. That is to say, frontiers have been changed. There are States, independencies and sovereignties where originally none existed ; and this thing has been produced without war.

But why did we so readily acquiesce, so readily surrender our power over the fiscal policies of the component territories of the Empire ? I suggest that the change is explained mainly by the fact that political and military powers can no longer be used as an instrument of economic exploitation. Speaking broadly, you cannot use power, force, to seize wealth, though you could once. Fifth-century raiders, border clans, Barbary chieftains, could carry off corn, gold, silver, wealth of all kinds. Presumably it was a profitable enterprise ; that sort of thing went on for a long time. Drake found it profitable : some of the earlier adventurers who went to India and other parts of the East followed methods which differed rather in degree than in kind from that of the early rovers. But M. Poincaré, when he entered the Ruhr with a vast army, could not seize enough wealth to pay for the cost of collecting it. The difference is due largely to the change which comes over the character of wealth as division of labour grows in complexity. When wealth takes mainly the form of stocks and

shares, of dividends paid for money whose value is dependent upon action taken by foreign governments in their own countries, upon such elusive things as commercial confidence, stock exchange speculation, gold reserves, the rate of interest, credit, seizure by force is no longer a simple matter. Before the industrial revolution, power could be used by a nation actually to take property of others ; but when we began to turn coal into bread by using it for manufactures to be exchanged for the surplus of food and raw material of foreigners, a curious reversal of position took place : we were more concerned to have people take our goods than we were to take theirs. In other words, we needed markets, people with money to buy our things, and if a population is to buy your goods in any considerable quantity it must itself be economically developed, must itself have some measure of order, be effective in its production and so forth. It is a fact that, although we have not yet fully realised it, you cannot with armies, ships, guns, the apparatus of coercion, compel a people to buy your goods if they have not got the money ; and they cannot have the money unless they themselves can sell goods ; they cannot sell goods save by some degree of social and industrial capacity.

But a community which is economically and socially developed is on the way to possessing power : coming more and more to a position in which it can debate the conditions upon which it shall buy your goods, even if, as in India of late, it has to resort to boycott. And I would point out that the India which the British adventurer of the seventeenth century knew could not have organised general boycott. It had not the necessary means of intercommunication to make such a weapon possible. We have furnished India with the weapon with

which she now fights us. That is a characteristic development in the economic relations of modern States ; it indicates the way in which military and political power tends to become economically futile.

Now, there is one respect, particularly, in which I think the significance of the truth I have just outlined is neglected. I can perhaps bring it home best by making this suggestion to you, namely, that this impossibility of conquest in the old sense of the term may prove in the final analysis a curse rather than a blessing to mankind ; one which may involve the disintegration and collapse of our civilisation. Imperial authority may prove tyrannical and unjust, but if it carries with it some cohesion and order, and the alternative to it is chaos, it is likely that the chaos will involve loss and hardship and injustice greater than that of Imperialism.

Whether the failure of the Imperialist method prove a curse or a blessing will depend upon what we substitute for it. We may substitute a fruitful co-operation or we may just as readily (and at present we seem disposed to do it) substitute disastrous chaos.

We have assumed, alike in the relationship of the States of the Empire and of the States of the world, that the logical alternative to Imperialism is the independence and sovereignty of each party concerned. That duplicates the usual experience of history. When a central authority loses its power over subordinate units, what has followed in history—as in the history of the Roman Empire and other large agglomerations—is not some form of federalism, partnership, but anarchy, and anarchy usually follows because the natural and instinctive reaction to any abuse of power on the part of a central authority is the assertion of independence. But, because a line of conduct is natural and instinctive, it does not necessarily

mean that it is workable in a social sense, for man is only in a very small part of his nature a social animal. He has a natural longing for freedom from all restrictions, and although he sees that anarchy could not possibly work as between individuals, he has an apparently indestructible faith in its workability as between nations.

We use this term "independent" as a symbol of the highest moral aim politically to which a people can pledge itself—witness the nationalist movements in Ireland, India, South Africa. And such Imperialists as resist the claim to independence do so apologetically, rather as a matter of expediency, and let the moral case go by default. I am suggesting that the claim to "independence" is an anti-social claim: that in a world so near to chaos as ours, Lincoln was right in his view that there exists an obligation to maintain such unions as the pains and stresses and blunderings of the past have left us. Incidentally, were it not for certain economic fallacies, I do not believe that a more cohesive Empire would not render more difficult the organisation of the world. As one who, if he had to choose between the Empire and the League, would certainly choose the League, I would like to see the "bonds of Empire" much stronger than in fact I believe them to be.

It is hopeful perhaps that much of the more recent literature of Imperial affairs deplores the anarchy which marks the relationship of the States of the Empire. Thus Mr. Stokes, in his recently published book, *New Imperial Ideals*, heads his first section, dealing with the Dominions, "A Dissolving Empire", and goes on to point out that the States which form the Geneva League of Nations have managed to form between them institutions which daily grow in strength, while the capacity for co-operation between the States of the Empire has been getting of late

steadily less. His statement of the impossibility of making nationality or independence a sufficient principle of co-operation is particularly suggestive.

"The relationship between equal nations conscious of their nationality and anxious to emphasise it is," he says, "a very delicate relationship. It is one to which the general run of ordinary political institutions, involving some form of subordination, are quite unsuited. Hence arises temptation to eschew institutions altogether, and with them, though this may not be realised at first, to eschew co-operation itself." And yet, as he goes on to point out, "without organised co-operation, the Empire, which the theory makes a league of States rather than a State, must progressively cease to perform the functions of a State. The functions must be performed, however, and without organised co-operation they will be performed more and more by each individual unit for itself, or if entrusted to one, as foreign policy is now entrusted to the Parliament of the United Kingdom, they are likely to be performed to the growing dissatisfaction of the others."

He insists that if we go on stressing independence, and failing to stress co-operation, we shall inevitably produce a state of affairs, which if not altered in time, will gradually bring about the dissolution of the Empire into a number of independent States, to the infinite multiplication of national jealousies and unhappiness in the world.

The comparison made by Mr. Stokes between the tendencies within the Empire and within the League is interesting :

The League, which is not the guardian type of civilisation and has no serious pretensions to be considered a State, much less to be the co-ordinating factor in the world economic unit, and which exists in fact merely

for certain very limited if important purposes in the sphere of inter-State relations, is elaborately furnished with institutions. The British Empire has almost none. The result is seen in the creation of a permanent and very definite "atmosphere" at Geneva which all acknowledge who have dealings with the League. The League has a continuity and a political and economic vivacity which is denied to the older and more organic British League. It gets more publicity in the British Empire than the Empire itself. It co-operates more under greater difficulties. It is a standing reproach to the anarchic constitution of the Empire.

In Mr. F. S. Oliver's book on Alexander Hamilton, written a quarter of a century ago, there is suggested the question, "Why have not the British States done what the States of the American Union were able to do?" Oliver says:

The final question with us, as with Hamilton, is how we may convert a voluntary League of States, terminable upon a breath, into a firm union. It is useless to regret what has been done or left undone through the last century; but it is not altogether profitless to consider in what position we might have found ourselves to-day had British policy during that period proceeded upon the centripetal instead of upon the centrifugal principle. Few will be found to deny that the Empire in such a case might already have become a strong political fact; that we might have retained within our boundaries a vast population which is now lost to us. . . . When we contemplate the nature of the opportunity in all its dimensions, we tremble at the possibility that it should be missed.

That opportunity has been missed, in part at least, because while change has been taking place in the Empire, we have been largely unconscious of the nature of the change, the direction in which we were travelling. We did not see clearly when we might have done that the old imperial method had broken down; and did not see the true alternative to that method.

It was plain thirty years ago for those who had eyes to see that the Empire in the old sense had come to an end. But because we had but the dimmest realisation of the kind of forces at work, we blundered blindly from an old relationship which had become unworkable straight into

another which is bound to be just as unworkable : from the attempt, that is, at the domination or coercion of one by the other, to the independence of each. Because we saw that domination would not work, we assumed that the only alternative was for each to go his own way. Because a relationship of inferior and superior was rightly offensive to one we supposed that equality of status was the all-sufficient solution. But equality of itself solves nothing ; it may mean an equality of failure. The alternative to the relationship of superior and inferior is partnership, on conditions which, though they need not be embodied in documents, or be rigid, must in their broad aspects be understood and observed. These conditions are not understood, since not even the *need* for partnership is understood. And one of the most suggestive features of the whole Indian difficulty is that Indians of almost all parties are concentrating upon the demand for Dominion status as the all-satisfying solution, just at a time when the inadequacy of the Dominion solution is beginning to be apparent, and those who have possessed Dominion status are beginning to see that the status of itself is little more than a mere negation, and of itself cannot work. An observer at the Imperial Conference, sensible of the enormity of the problems which face us—disintegration, poverty, unemployment, armament, war—listening to impassioned pleas for the right of secession demanded by certain Dominions, made this reply : “ Very good. We grant it. Just how many of these problems does *that* solve ? ” It solves, of course, none at all. But if the principle of independence is solving no problems, it is perpetually creating new ones. For if independence and self-determination, as the natural attributes of nationalism, are valid as against any tie between Britain and India, they are certainly as valid against any tie

between one Indian nation or community and another ; especially as the sense of difference between the units within India, is as old in centuries as the new sense of unity is in years. It is only the first achievement of Indian Nationalism to separate India from Britain ; the next, unless happily we can introduce some integrating and federalising principle, will separate one Indian State from another, as nationalism in Europe has separated States and brought us to chaos.

Yet on its moral side the case for unity as against disruption is usually allowed to go by default. It is assumed practically without discussion that if India or Egypt or Ireland want independence they are entitled to it and the way to solve the problem is to grant it ; if the Chinese desire us to clear out of Shanghai or Hong Kong we have nothing to do but clear out. If there is interference in China or Nicaragua, or Haiti or Egypt, such interference can only be the result of dictation by avaricious capitalist concession-hunters, and should stop. The principles of non-interference, of the independence of all peoples, the respect of their sovereignty and self-determination, are quite simple, unassailable principles and governments have only to adhere to them. Such usually is the daily indictment brought by Socialists and Radicals.

It is true that when parties, to which such critics belong, take office, no such simple and rapid solution is applied. There is, as a rule, no clearing out ; the "Imperialist" situation continues, new cruisers sometimes are voted, military occupations are continued, military expeditions sanctioned—and the new Left Governments are accused by rank-and-filers of betraying their principles ; of being corrupted by power, or overawed by Imperialist or Capitalist forces when at close grips with them. And the "forward" sections of the party are apt to wax

sarcastic and indulge in violent invective directed at the chiefs.

But is this explanation of "corruption by power" quite adequate? Is it that principles have been betrayed or that the principles proclaimed while in opposition are themselves unsound—as unsound as the mischievous Imperialism against which they are a protest?

That question is raised incisively by certain incidents of the last few years, one or two of which may be taken at hazard.

Take the Russo-Chinese conflict. Russia and China were brought to dangerous conflict over the question of Russian property rights, the rights inhering in a Russian railway concession on Chinese soil. And all sound judges familiar with the facts agree that Russia is in this matter at least in the right, and China in the wrong. No other resource was open to Russia, it is all but universally agreed, but "to put her foot down".

Yet if the war had come as a result of the Russian ultimatum to China—and it looked for a moment as though war might have come—it would have been a war arising out of the "economic exploitation of Chinese soil by foreign concessionaires"—or that is how Socialist critics would have described it if the war had been waged by a "bourgeois" Government. No power so much as Russia has inveighed against the iniquity of waging wars for commercial concessions, nor so vigorously upheld the right of China to be completely "sovereign and independent", nor gone so far in acting upon that principle. The Soviets found themselves the heirs to a very Imperialist inheritance in the matter of the Chinese Eastern Railway. Under the Tsars, the railway territory or zone, running a thousand miles across the Chinese Empire, was nearly as much Russian soil as the Nevski Prospect.

It was the extremest expression of extra-territoriality, one of the most striking examples of the violations of the Chinese sovereignty against which Russia in common with other Socialists have protested. When the Soviets first came to power, they not only spoke against the Imperialism, they translated their words into policy, voluntarily surrendering their Imperialist position. In 1924 they made the arrangement which respected more scrupulously the independence and sovereignty of China.

It has not worked. The Nationalism of China has been as immoderate and acquisitive as Nationalism tends to be everywhere, and the Soviets have made the discovery that the unqualified right of China to do as she likes in *her own house* may well be a menace to the economic life of Russia, to the livelihood of millions outside the borders of China. It is not true to say that Russia has no rights in China and that what goes on within the Chinese borders does not concern Russians. Russia *has* rights in China, and is justified in defending them ; and China has obligations to Russia, an obligation to keep open a great highway of the world, and not to allow to grow up a chaos which threatens the safety of China's neighbours. No one has the " right " to an incompetence or disorder which threatens the ruin of others.

But if these rights on Chinese soil can be claimed for Russia, they can be claimed for other nations as well ; and in other countries. What the Chinese Eastern Railway is to Russia, the Suez Canal may well be to Britain, and other highways to other countries. What the reciprocal rights and obligations of the nations should be is not an easy problem to solve. Simple self-determination, absolute Nationalism, each nation being complete master in its own territory, does not solve the problem at all. Yet this absolute Nationalism, the " right " of each to

be "free and independent", is the principle which by implication the Socialist critic usually offers as the only alternative to the Imperialism against which he protests. Such absolute Nationalism will not work and the responsible Governments of dense populations faced with the problems of subsistence simply will not accept it.

If the Suez Canal is blocked, or trade with India or Australia is made impossible, children in certain streets of Manchester or Liverpool die. In the discussion of "rights" it might with deference be suggested that these children too, their food and well-being, have to be considered, have "rights" to be taken into account, as much as the spiritual rights of desert tribesmen to object to the presence within their "national" borders of infidel contrivances like canals and steamships.

This explains why it is that Governments formed by Socialist, Labour or Pacifist parties continue in some measure the policies of their bourgeois and Imperialist predecessors. Faced with the necessity of definite action upon actual problems, charged with the responsibility of providing for actual needs, they continue certain features of Imperialism, because the anti-Imperialism of their opposition days included no policy in the constructive sense of the term at all. Not only was it negative and critical, but it involved an attitude implying a gross over-simplification of the real problem of modern statecraft.

The problem of the disorderly State, guardian of things necessary to life and comfort in a world which still needs to be fed, clothed and warmed, or of world highways, or world gateways—that problem is not created by Capitalism, and would not be solved by Socialism. It is the product not of Capitalism but of Nationalism. And Socialist States which were also Nationalist would have

even more cause for quarrel than States which permit individuals to form economic organisations which are often in fact international, which function in large degree irrespective of national barriers.

"Absolute" self-determination, or sovereignty, or independence, is incompatible with civilisation. To talk, as anti-Imperialist critics sometimes do, as though a few thousand desert tribesmen or Hispano-Indian peasants, if only they will call themselves a "nation", should have complete control of raw materials indispensable to the world as a whole, or the right to block some world highway, is to set up standards which in fact will not be observed, and the ethics of which perhaps do not deserve observance.

To say that Colombia, because in the welter and chaos of the South American revolutions against the Spanish power the isthmus of Panama happened to fall within her territory, is therefore entitled to hold up the building of the Panama Canal, or a small Arabian tribe to endanger the Suez Canal, and that no great Power or Powers must trespass on the sanctity of their nationality, is to part with the world of reality.

If we are to say that the Russians have *no* rights in Manchuria, nor the British in Chinese Treaty ports, nor in India, where they have been much longer than the Americans have been in California or Texas, where is one to stop? Must North America be evacuated in favour of the Red Indians? To talk in terms of Nationalist absolutes lands us in phantasy.

It is true, of course, that when the great State does assert itself, as in the case of Panama or the Suez Canal, it is often by bullying and chicane. But it does not solve the problem, nor prevent similar bullying and chicane in the future, to suggest as the only alternative that

Britain can sacrifice her trade, and the world's ships continue to go round the Horn.

The true method is not to deny the right of the powerful State but to extend the right to others, to the weak ; to see that the same protections and securities accorded to British and Americans are accorded also to Indians or Egyptians or Arabians or Colombians, and the same limitations impartially imposed. If the means by which certain definite millions obtain food for their stomachs and clothes for their backs are not ensured by methods which will take into account all the rights involved, then the strongest party will settle the matter and be his own judge of his own rights against all others whatsoever.

In other words, the remedy for Imperialism is not Nationalism, which threatens to Balkanise the world, but Internationalism, which, be it noted, is not the denial of Nationalism but its orderly organisation, the limitation of its rights in the same way that in any civilised society the right of the individual must be made subject to the general interest in order that the individual can live at all.

Of course we talked during the war a great deal of "self-determination" and the rights of nationality. They were things for which we were supposed to be fighting. Empires disappeared and a world was smashed in order that those principles might be vindicated. Few themes were more popular in Britain during the war. Because the German and Austrian empires violated "self-determination" they had, in the interest of political morals, to be destroyed. Such was the simple view of war time.

Some of our trouble in India dates from that time. It was inevitable that Indian Nationalists should apply these glowing proclamations to themselves as well as to Serbians or Czechoslovaks. There is something perhaps

of poetic justice in the fact that part of our present troubles are the heirs of those sweeping—and dishonest and insincere—wartime generalisations.

If we are to think clearly at all on the matter we must realise that here, as elsewhere in wartime, we talked quite unworkable nonsense—the elusive kind of nonsense which passes muster because the falsehood is mixed with some measure of truth which colours it and enables it to get by.

A Nationalist said the other day with reference to the “imperialist oppressions”, that “an invader has no rights except to be expelled”. And he implied that there was no statute of limitations. The British in India were invaders and the numbers of years that have passed since the invasion had, he added, nothing to do with it. But they are not the only invaders in India, and if the other invaders, whose invasion goes back a little further, are also to be expelled, then the other Indians—North American—might ask the Whites to evacuate Manitoba, or Ontario, or Massachusetts, or for that matter New York. If one takes a fairly long sweep in historical retrospect, it is impossible to say who is the invader and who is aborigine. There are many areas in which different “nations” live in the same street, and have lived for centuries.

Absolute principles are reduced to absurdity in this question by the facts of history. The migrations, the invasions, the overlappings date back to pre-history. It is a fact that the English in America have driven back or driven out the native by cruelties and ferocities that were sometimes unspeakable, just as the Scandinavians and the Germans drove back the native Briton : and the Norman, at a later date, imposed his rule upon the previous invader. It is plainly ridiculous to suppose that a sponge can be

passed over centuries of history because an "invader has no rights".

Self-determination, as we were reading it during the war, and as some of us continue to read it, ignores historical fact as completely as would the demand of the Red Indian tribes still existing in North America that the invaders of New York and Chicago should kindly go back home. Conditions, good, bad or indifferent, have been created by past events, and it is those conditions with which we have to grapple. One of the conditions is that the welfare, the very existence of individuals on one side of the world are dependent upon what is done by certain individuals on the other side of the world. And as a matter of very elementary morals, of the most rudimentary social obligation, the one group must guide its conduct in some degree by the effect which its conduct may have upon the other.

This is all surely self-evident. Yet the problem of political nationalism, self-determination, Imperialism, is too often discussed as though these plain facts were non-existent, especially the plain fact of the world-wide interdependence of peoples, and consequent mutual obligations the one to the other.

Having recognised one fundamental fact we must also recognise others. Indians are entitled to say to Englishmen: "We admit that India has obligations to Britain and the outside world, as Britain has obligations to India. We do not admit the right of Britain to be sole judge as to what they are, or to impose her will upon India: any more than Britain would admit the right of India to be sole judge or to impose her will upon Britain if she could."

What is the reply? It is that at present there is no systematically organised world society, no generally

recognised world authority ; and the relations of States are chaotic and anarchic to a degree which is not true at all of the relations between individuals living within the same nation. Two individuals living in a systematically organised State can live in equal partnership under the conditions of a contract because, in all orderly nations there are courts to settle impartially points of difference and enforce contracts. Neither party is likely to challenge the overriding authority of the State. But when there is no common authority, no organised society, a condition of contract almost inevitably becomes one of the "status"—a condition in which the more powerful of the two parties has the casting vote. Otherwise, when honest differences arise, and each side is passionately convinced that it is right and the other wrong, you get sheer deadlock. And deadlock, the suspense of vital activities, will not long endure in a world that must somehow feed its people. When the traffic is blocked because a dispute is on as to whether cars should go to the left as in Britain or to the right as abroad, it matters less whether it should be right or left than that it should be one or the other, and that the decision should be universally enforced.

Stated differently : there is so little of inter-State organisation in existence, and the need for it so great, that we cannot lightly sacrifice even such imperfect organisation as exists. For a world in dire need above all of integration, of the enlargement of the areas acknowledging some common authority, any principle like that of unqualified self-determination or such independence as tends to disintegration, may well be examined with great caution.

If chaos and disintegration should follow the withdrawal of British power, Britain could not be indifferent, apart from the material interests involved, which are very

great. There is in the background of the minds of the British statesmen another danger. Chaos and general disintegration might conceivably be followed, if Britain withdrew, by Russian domination of that sub-continent. The Russians might succeed in India where they have failed in China, and where chaos has been introduced largely as the result of contact with Western civilisation, without control by it.

Indian leaders minimise these possibilities, but neither they nor the British can know how great or small they may be. Both are bound to proceed upon probabilities.

When the Englishman says that the danger of anarchy in India makes it imperative for British Power to remain, the Indian is apt to take this as a meaning that the Englishman is professing to be moved purely by Indian interest. But good order in India—not British domination for the purpose of special advantages, but the maintenance of Indian internal peace—is, given the assumptions which still dominate in international politics, a supreme British interest.

It is not merely or mainly the question of British trade in India, considerable as is that interest for Britain. (Incidentally, the fact of India's present fiscal independence is all but unrealised by most foreign critics of Britain. The statement that it was now open to India to exclude British goods by a stiff hostile tariff, and by bounties upon Indian production; that this was actually being done now by India in defiance of British commercial interest—this simple statement of fact was recently flatly denied at a meeting in New York in turn by an Indian, an American, a Chinese and a German. Despite general feeling to the contrary, Britain is not adept at making known her own case.)

The case goes deeper than mere immediate commercial

interest. It is related to that contest for power into which in our present international anarchy, every great State is led, however mistakenly, as a condition of secure national life.

Chaos and disorder have always exposed a country to the risk of foreign intervention. Foreign citizens and interests become endangered, and grounds for action for their protection are created. A State may be small and weak ; but if it is orderly the risk of invasion is extremely small. Compare the history of small but orderly States in Northern Europe—the Scandinavian States, the Low Countries, Switzerland—with larger but more disorderly States to the east and south-east. It is fashionable to rail at the Imperialism of the United States in its occupation of States like Nicaragua and threatened interventions in Mexico ; and to declare that “ conquest for dividends ” is the impelling motive of war in a capitalist society. But the United States has infinitely more money embarked in Canada than in Mexico or Nicaragua ; but there is never any question of intervention in Canada. From the capitalist point of view there does not need to be ; Canadians under their own government can be trusted to make as profitable a field for American investment as that Dominion could be as the result of American political control. If Mexico has known European and American intervention (and the Maximilian episode nearly involved America in war with France), the reason has to be sought in the instability of Mexican conditions. Chaos in India might well involve sooner or later foreign intervention in some form. If the Communist Government of Moscow becomes strong and established it would certainly in any condition of Indian anarchy attempt intervention as part of the process of world revolution—and have far greater chance of success

than in China, where Communist influence has not been negligible. That is indeed the definite and admitted programme of the Communist organisation. It makes no bones at all about proclaiming it. If the Communist régime collapses and is succeeded by a White reactionary Russian Government, the old fears will be re-established. Indians—or some Indians¹—deride the notion of the possibility of disorder and anarchy in India. But if China—far more unified, far more homogeneous in every respect than India, with its unity as ancient and deep-rooted as India's is modern and without roots, can slip into anarchy as it has done, how can we be positive that India would not do so, when forces which alone have made her a unit are withdrawn? And India as the subject of Russian Communist "world revolution" effort would hardly add to the world's peace.

In their present mood the Indian leaders are taking a line which excludes the possibility of the really wise course, which is the co-operation of Britain and India for the welfare of both. They reject that on behalf of virtually complete independence. Anything less they declare

¹ Many Indians, of course, admit the need of a transition period during which Britain must defend India. Thus Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, P.C., C.H., writing in the *Spectator* on the recommendation sometimes heard in Britain to "Leave India to her Fate", says:

"Before withdrawing much must be done to enable India to defend herself. Acute and complicated problems, of which the real magnitude will appear in the pages of the Simon Commission's Report, must be solved or brought within reach of solution before the country can be handed over to its proper and natural custodians. A period of transition is therefore to be provided for. Take only the question of the country's security. The Indianisation of the present army and the preparation of the citizens for the duty of self-sacrifice are processes which require not only time, but skill and delicacy of organisation. In spite of urgent and repeated entreaties they have received so far nothing but perfunctory treatment. It would be a gross betrayal, nothing short of infamy, if Britain were to leave India without liquidating this supreme obligation."

to be a reflection upon India, an implication that she is less able than Canada, or Australia, to become immediately, and by her own efforts, an independent State. In any case, the leaders go on repeating, the right to independence is not something they will discuss, or accept as a gift from others. Again and again have Indian leaders, including Gandhi, declared that they will "not accept freedom as a gift" but will "prove their right to it by suffering self-sacrifice". They desire to force it, not have it willingly granted by a British Government at the time and in the conditions in which that Government may see fit. Independence is not to be the final aim, it is to be the starting-point of all discussion. Independence first, say the Indians. And then, if there are to be treaties, special arrangements . . . we will see.

Well, we taught them all that. It is the language of Victorian Radicalism plus the war propaganda about "self-determination" and the fight for democracy—a fight in which, be it remembered, we invited Indians to share, and in which they did share.

But the tragedy of the thing is that Indians are adopting these Western principles just as the West is discovering that they are quite inadequate to the modern world. Europe is now labouring painfully and clumsily to correct the shortcomings of Nationalism and political independence by some form of Federalism. All recognise the need for unity ; for some method of integration. If there is one thing certain in modern politics it is this : That if we in the West cannot get beyond Nationalism and self-determination, then all hope of making Europe a place where men may live in peace and labour fruitfully must be surrendered. Wherever a Nationalist claim to independence has been granted—in Poland, in Roumania, in Jugo-Slavia, in Italy, wherever one may turn—the

granting of the Nationalist claim sets up as many problems as it solves. Self-determination cannot be satisfied, because pushed to its conclusion you would want half a dozen governments in the same street. Independence ought not to be claimed by anyone. We must be partners. The price we pay for civilisation is the surrender of the right of each to be his own master.

The wiser of the Indian leaders admit this. But, they say, when we have won our right to freedom and independence, we will, on equal terms with other states, take our part in world co-operation through the League of Nations, or such instrument as may exist; we refuse to be less than, say, a Canada.

Again we get certain Victorian assumptions which experience is compelling us to modify. It is assumed that the independence which has come to inhere in Dominion Status is an entirely good and workable feature which needs no modification. But the independent states of the Empire (and they are independent states, admittedly) are now busy trying to retrace their steps, trying to achieve some means of acting together, some machinery of imperial unity, or federalism. It takes in the economic field fantastic forms, with talk of a closed Empire, imperial free trade, what not. But even the fantasies are testimony to the need for greater unity, more efficient means for common action. No one who can weigh events at all believes for a moment that the present looseness of the Commonwealth will be its final form, that it will crystallise in that form. It will either follow the disintegrating tendency of the time and dissolve completely, with not even the vague general understandings that now bind it, or it will strengthen the integrating tendencies (for the two tendencies exist and fight each other) by steady growth towards greater union.

It is sometimes argued : To the degree to which, say, an Irish Free State, or the South African Union or India, gets away from the Empire it gets towards Geneva, and one grouping is exchanged for another. But if the disruptive forces grow, and we get Europe split into an ever-increasing number of small states (like those of the eighteenth-century Germanies), the League will become an utterly unworkable organ. A League of two hundred or five hundred states (and India alone could supply the number if every native state should insist upon its "complete independence and sovereignty") would be either a hotbed of futile political gerrymandering, or become as unreal as the Holy Roman Empire at its worst.

To get anything done, anything decided, any rules established, any real government of the world at work through our very precarious experiment of the League, every unifying organ must be developed to its utmost. To discard one which has operated for nearly two hundred years, in order to give a "moral satisfaction" to aspirations which, however human and excusable, are not in the last analysis moral because they are not socially workable, is surely to head for tragic failures under the flourish of high-sounding slogans.

It is not on these grounds of the need for world unity, the critic may reply, that Britain resists India's claim for freedom. Perhaps not, though a word on that in a moment. It takes more than a "British view" (or for that matter an "Indian view") to realise the case for unity, which is here invoked, as it took more than a Northern view, or even an American view, to realise the case for union against secession as Lincoln saw it. The case was something apart from the question of slavery. "If", said Lincoln, in effect, "I could save the Union by acquiescence in slavery, I would acquiesce. If by fighting

slavery I can save the Union, I will fight slavery." He would have resisted secession even if the Southerners had been prepared to pay for it by manumission. He was prepared to incur war—or slavery—for the sake of the Union because he felt, and perhaps rightly, that upon the survival of the Union depended the survival of democracy throughout the world. Democracy had not yet, it must be remembered, in the middle of the nineteenth century, fully vindicated itself in Britain or in Europe. On the Western hemisphere—throughout, that is, the whole of South and Central America—it was a little more than a feeble and at times grotesque experiment. In the North American Union alone it had shown vigour and promise. If that Union broke up, the great experiment of popular government might indeed "perish from the earth".

Lincoln, the great democrat, fought for democracy by denying, in his forcible coercion of a people who resisted him, the very principle of government by consent which he proclaimed. It required something more than a flourish of slogans to arrive at the conviction that to compel a people by force to remain under a government which they hated and repudiated was a necessary course for the preservation of government "of the people, for the people, by the people". He appealed from the mere superficial inconsistency to the fundamental reality. He, too, fought for a unity, without which, he felt, free human government could not survive.

The danger to-day takes another form, but the same kind of choice between being guided by an over-simplified formula and the preservation of the reality of the thing which the formula states may well present itself. The predominant danger to-day is not the repression of the forms of democratic government, because it is begin-

ning to be recognised everywhere that those forms may have to be changed if the essence is to be preserved. The danger is such confusion and chaos that the common aims necessary for any good workable society can never be agreed upon and enforced.

Yet India presents a claim which cannot be disregarded. The Indian is demanding the right to learn to be able to govern himself, as one of the attributes attaching to his dignity as a human being.

If the Germans were ruling Britain we should regard all their boast of order, organisation, and efficiency as irrelevant to the discussion which we certainly have with them.

And the case of the Indian against the British Raj is in one respect stronger than the imagined case of the Briton against Germany. The moral values of Briton and German are fundamentally similar : of Briton and Hindu fundamentally dissimilar. The Hindu believes that the moral foundations of his whole social system are menaced by the Western industrialism and usury which the Westernised government does so much to foster.

In a very suggestive little book, *The Case for India*, which has been published by Dents, the author, Mr. John Hoyland, says :

" Once admit the right of the West to influence us, with the superiority of the Western outlook and methods of work ", so runs the thought of the great majority, " and India is doomed. The West is so efficient, so systematic, so intrusive, that our ancient institutions can never stand against her influence. The only hope for them, and for the survival of the Indian attitude of life, work, religion, is total freedom from Western interference. Men like Tagore, who recommend an attitude of receptivity towards what is best in European life, are more dangerous to India, because such Indians are better able to attract and convert Indians, than those who are already Westernised, and so have become self-admitted aliens in their own country. . . . "

In a sense it is a policy of fanaticism, of root and branch severance from much which, its adherents frankly admit, might be of great material service to their country. It involves the risk of reaction in political life, in social reform, in such essential matters as education, the raising of the outcastes, sanitation, communication, scientific agriculture, famine relief. Above all it involves the risk of internal disorder.

But the average Hindu whilst recognising the risks which *Swaraj* involves, is fully prepared to allow his country to take those risks. He believes so firmly in her ancient socio-religious system on the one hand, and he dreads so profoundly the all-pervading influence of the West on the other, with its scientific warfare, its systematisation, its depersonalised, industrial system, and the strife to which this leads, that he is willing to run any risk whatsoever in order to give his country entire freedom.

What we are confronted with here is no quarrel about material things but about spiritual values, ideals. One hears, it is true, a good deal of passionate oratory about capitalist exploitation, but that is an afterthought, a rationalisation, in the psychological sense of that horrible word. The severance of the British connection is quite irrelevant to any question of capitalist exploitation. Capitalism can be, and is, quite as readily Indian as British. The Bombay cotton mills, owned by Indian capitalists, would still exploit the Indian worker with as much ruthlessness as ever were all British connections to cease. And British capitalism does not need the political tie : as witness the vast sums that have been sunk in countries like Argentina, Brazil, Turkey, to say nothing of the United States. In so far as British capitalists, with their main investments in Lancashire, are interested in the Indian mill-hand, they desire that Indian wages should rise as near to the British scale as possible so as not to have to face a low-wage competition. Fiscally, India is already independent ; she imposes hostile tariffs on British textiles, cottons, irons, steels. How do those who declare so airily that Britain holds India simply in order to bleed her economically, explain Britain's

permission to India to erect these tariffs? Is this some deep plot of Capitalism? And when the British interests concerned—the cotton and textile and iron and steel manufacturers—protest violently and agitate to get these duties repealed, is this some elaborate piece of comedy? Indian Nationalists used to declare with dogmatism that the test of Britain's sincerity in not holding India for purposes of economic exploitation would be the granting of these rights to put an Indian tariff on British goods. It was freely declared that never, never, would this right be granted India. It has been granted. But the fact has not made the faintest difference to the attitude of those who insist that Britain's sole purpose in India is economic exploitation, to the disadvantage of India. Britain's main economic interest in India is as a market, and for the purpose of that market she has a supreme interest in the raising of the standard of life in India and in security and peace in that country. The case has been fairly stated by Mr. Edwyn Bevan in his *Thoughts on Indian Discontents* :

Nationalists picture the India which would exist with *Swaraj* as an orderly and prosperous India, and if it were an orderly and prosperous India it would be a favourable field for British trade and British capital. Nothing, strange as it seems, would tend to remove the British opposition to *Swaraj* more effectually than if the Indian extremist leaders could give British men of business a sure guarantee that the extremist programme would be realised! Of course it is quite impossible for anyone to give such a guarantee; for the control of the antagonistic elements in India is not a task which any set people can be sure that they would succeed in until they have tried. British commercial interests do not want to run the risk of the experiment being made under existing conditions.

Incidentally, he deals with the point made above about Indian duties :

I remember some time about 1914 talking to an Indian of ability in the Civil Service, and his maintaining that the real test of British sincerity

is professions of goodwill to India would be whether England would consent to India's putting protective duties on foreign imports, including British. He doubted whether the British would ever consent to that. I met him again two years ago, and reminded him of our previous conversation, saying: "How now? What you thought hardly possible came to pass." He smiled, and said that it was so, but that he himself had now come to question whether protective duties were really a good thing for India.

It is not to economic or political oppression that we must look to explain Indian bitterness, but to causes that occupy small place in the Blue Books. The Simon Report may be rightly regarded as one of the greatest State documents that has ever appeared. And yet of the two most vital factors involved in the whole Indian problem one is barely mentioned, and the other not at all. Plainly the two most fundamental questions that can be asked about the problem are: Why, in the last analysis, does India want independence? And why does Britain hesitate to grant it?

No official answer goes to the bottom of these points. Those answers deal with politics, with constitutional machinery, administrative organisation. But, a very large element of the difficulty is something outside politics in any narrow sense: the attitude which it is the custom of the British to take towards "natives"—all Asiatic or "coloured" peoples. To put it brutally, the British in India have in the past been apt to regard an Indian, because he was an Indian, and for no other reason whatever, as an inferior being. Any people subjected to that will rebel and assert their equality, even though the rebellion, and even though equality may deprive them of great material advantage. This resentment, this feeling will not be expressed in political programmes, by demands made at Congresses or Conventions; its very character forbids explicit expression. The programmes may talk

of political or economic grievance, but the real demands are for the termination of all contacts which thus affront human dignity.

Of late years, most of the writers of any penetration dealing with India recognise this fact. Thus in a book just published an Anglo-Indian ¹ writes :

There can be no possible doubt that the personal hostility of the average Indian to-day to the average Englishman and the English Government is simply a defensive reaction against the overbearing arrogance and open contempt which nearly all Englishmen working in India display towards the Indians of all classes. . . . To put it briefly, the Indian, whatever we may pretend, is considered and treated as an inferior race, and an Englishman's word in India is bound as a general rule to be taken against an Indian's. It is fairly safe then for an Englishman to treat an Indian as he likes.

Testimony to the same unhappy fact is abundant. Mr. C. F. Andrews writes in the *Nation* :

There is a very striking paragraph, if my memory serves me rightly, in the Imperial Conference Report of 1924, where Sir Tei Bahadur Sapru teaches General Smuts a lesson about Indian character. He says in so many words : " You may take away all kinds of things from us, who are Indians by birth, and we shall passively endure this treatment ; but if you touch our *izzat* (which may be translated ' self-respect ') no Indian will endure it. We would rather die a thousand deaths than lose it. We are the most patient and kindly people in the world until this final insult is offered us which we call the ' loss of *izzat* '. Beware lest ever you drive us to this extreme point."

This fault belongs more to the past than to the present. The Anglo-Indian of to-day recognises the innate cad-dishness of the older attitude ; but the damage has been

¹ Lieut.-Colonel Arthur Osborn, D.S.O., *Must England Lose India?* (Knopf).

There is a half-page passage in Vol. I of the Simon Report which touches on status. It says : " The political sentiment, which is most widespread among all educated Indians, is the demand for equality with Europeans. . . . It is a great deal more than a personal feeling ; it is the claim of the East for due recognition of status."

done, and we are confronted now by a mood in India in which nothing that the British power can do can be right. It has become part of Indian patriotism to refuse to admit that any British action can be right ; to deny the advantages of the British connection, even when those advantages are self-evident, undeniable.

The Nationalist movement is rooted in something apart and distinct from economic problems or material welfare. The Nationalists have raised (if that is the word) the conception of "independence" to the position of a supreme spiritual good, just at a time when in the West we are beginning to recognise that independence is a word that we should banish as either unreal and meaningless or definitely anti-social.

Gandhi himself is not afraid to assert plainly a scale of values which places this misconceived spiritual value over and above considerations of material welfare. He admits that economically India may be worse off, much worse off in some respects, as the result of the severance of the British connection. But the British connection means, we are told, moral slavery for the Indians ; is a thing spiritually evil whatever its material advantages. We get now from Indian mouths the phrases so familiar to Victorian Radicalism to the effect that good government can never be a substitute for self-government ; that freedom should never be sold for mere money and comfort.

It follows, of course, from this that nothing the British Government could possibly do, or could have done, would save it, that all its good would, in the eyes of Gandhi and his followers, be evil. He and his followers admit freely that certain phases of the British connection are indispensable to Indian welfare, and are prepared to retain them *if India first is granted independence* and that

those features follow at her request as from one equal to another.

Mr. Kirby Page, an American journalist, favourable to Indian independence, writes of Gandhi and his colleagues with whom he has talked at length :

They recognised the wisdom and necessity of permitting England to continue certain controls for a limited period. They were willing to retain British troops and a British commander-in-chief for a number of years and to allow England to direct foreign affairs and relations with the Indian Princes. But—and here is the crux of the whole controversy—they insisted that all this should be done at the request of the free Dominion of India and should be terminated at its pleasure or by previous agreement. . . . They are wholly unwilling to accept the status of minor in the family and wait many years for the bestowal of rights and privileges. They dismiss as irrelevant the question as to whether or not India is fit for self-government. They say that freedom is an alienable right of a people. . . .

“Many times Gandhi has said that liberty can never be gained as a free gift but must be claimed as an inherent right.” Young India is described by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu as saying : “We want no document. Our document, our charter, is our own action, our strength, written if necessary in our life blood.” And she added as her own view that so far as India expects help from a single section of political England, to that extent she discounts the reality of her freedom.

Plainly, no improvement in economic or social welfare, if it comes from the hands of Britain, will meet this temper. The Indian of this type wants not so much the freedom of India as the humiliation of Britain. This last fact is proved by the recent declaration of Gandhi that he would be perfectly willing to have India governed by its Mohammedan minority. Thus, for Hindus to be governed by Moslems is quite compatible with the freedom and independence of Hindus ; for Britons to act as arbiters between the two sections is slavery.

What we are confronted with here is a question of status—pride—dignity, a revolt from a position of inferiority which the Indian as an individual, not India as a political unit, has been made to feel in his contact with the English element in India. The spiritual roots of India's revolt *are* largely—much more largely than any Blue Book or official document can possibly indicate—a revolt, a natural, justifiable revolt, against the colour-bar or the native-bar. Britain may lose India, not from failure of political or economic justice, but from the caddishness of a certain British tradition, an attitude in dealing with “natives”. An Englishman, of course, is apt to judge English behaviour from the best individual examples, which are extremely good ; and an Indian is apt to judge them from the worst, which are extremely bad. Mr. Bevan, to quote him once more, brings out this point when he reports an Indian as saying to him :

I am incapable of objectivity in judging the uses and demerits of the British connection. Surely much good has come out of it. My own life has been richer and more adventurous and fuller for it. But when I think of the British in India, I always see a drunken rough soldier who entered our house and whipped my aunt, or a customs official (probably a Eurasian) who hit my father for being in his wife's way on the pavement. That such things can take place is enough for me to condemn a relation which has developed along many contradictory paths.

The evil was not that this kind of thing occasionally occurred, but that “British superiority” was deliberately cultivated by very many in India as a theory of government. Only so, certain Anglo-Indians used to tell us, could prestige be maintained. One sees it reflected in novels and plays where the “taint” of native blood in a “white” man is something to be whispered about, to be regarded as a tragedy. Until yesterday the British in India, to

put it crudely, treated the native as an inferior being. Whatever the degree of his civilisation, whatever his culture, he was, to the Anglo-Indian, a "nigger". Of recent years an honest attempt has been made by the British authority to discourage this caddishness. But for generations it was not only tolerated, it was deliberately cultivated.

We can only be amazed that any man who gave a second thought to the facts of human nature could ever suppose that this attitude would be tolerated a moment longer than sheer force could compel it. No "law and order", no material benefits, nothing that could ever be offered on the material side, will ever reconcile the normal human being to the acknowledgment of that kind of inferiority. The ultimate trouble here, as elsewhere, in other aspects of this problem of the coloured empire, lies in the assumption that the emotions which govern our own conduct will somehow not govern the conduct of others, particularly of "natives". These feelings are too deep-rooted not to be universal. "If we *must* be Imperialists, let it be like gentlemen."

That evil tradition belongs happily rather to the past, though the damage may have been done. If it was an evil thing, as it was, not less evil will be done by Indians if they allow their demands to be determined by the psychology which it has bequeathed, and if the memory of the caddishness impels them to refuse to face the truth to which perhaps the West is just awakening, that the ideals of independence and "freedom" they are now proclaiming in nineteenth-century rhetoric are inadequate to the needs of the modern world.

If and when India achieves "independence" she will be faced by vast problems of the working together of

hostile religious groups and castes, of the sweeping away of deeply seated evils like untouchability, child marriage—evils buttressed by religious prejudice—undeveloped agriculture, irrigation. One could get some measure of the problem if one could imagine the whole of Europe, with all its differences of races and language, much of it still in the Middle Ages, faced by the problem of organising itself into a single state after the removal of some unifying influence like the Roman Empire or the Roman Church. In such a superhuman task common sense would indicate that a useful part might be played and a valuable contribution made by the presence of a few trained experts in government and administration, produced by the nation which has, when all criticisms are spent, done the best with that democracy which it is the object of India to establish. The very fact that such servants of India would be foreign, should not be, as Nationalism asserts it is, the one thing to disqualify them. It is precisely the element that the Indian situation needs ; the quality of detachment from the religious and racial conflict that will constitute so great an obstacle to Indian stability.

It may be that the sterility and evil of some of the ideals which Indians, like Europeans of the immediate past, proclaim as the highest, can only be shown by experience ; that we must all go further to chaos before we can begin the work of integration. Those best qualified to judge the Irish situation tell us that the old passion of the Irish for political abstractions is dying in the disillusionment of independence as a solvent for the day-by-day problems of life. It is indeed argued by the more realist type of Nationalist that only by revealing by actual experience the unworkability of pure Nationalism can the buildings of the international house begin.

The argument runs that the economic realities will not be faced until the "national aspirations" have been satisfied. Thus "Æ", in his pathetic leave-taking of the *Irish Statesman*, writes :

We think now it would be impossible to stampede by rhetoric. . . . A year ago one of our most fluent orators cried out passionately to let the grass grow on the streets of Belfast and that the flag of the Republic should be erected on Cave Hill. We are convinced that those who heard thought that kind of talk rather foolish. Ten years ago the same speech might have set guns going off.

We have passed away from our passionate selves, and are coming slowly to our intellectual selves. We will not be altogether safe until a new generation, better educated than the present, comes from the primary, secondary and technical schools and the universities to manhood and brings better equipped brains to bear upon the problems of their country. But self-government has definitely promoted the political and economic education of Irish people. One of the best consequences now is that there is little hatred of our neighbours.

In fact, a reasoned friendliness is replacing the traditional sense that the Sassenach was the enemy. There are few Irish farmers who do not realise that their market is across the Channel, that the poverty of that market means their poverty and its prosperity has reaction here. With the fact staring them in the face, and the situation no longer complicated by the struggle for self-government, it would be natural for a reasoned friendliness to replace the old antagonisms.

But unhappily the problem which would confront the Indians after independence would be infinitely more complex and difficult than that which confronted the Irish. If we have to come, after our orgies of nationalism, to co-operation and integration, in which each must acknowledge obligations to the other, is it not wisdom to cut out the intervening stage and build now, on the foundations and materials we have got, the house which we shall ultimately have to build on no better foundation, and with material just as difficult to gather and to handle ?

Assuming that the line of advance in India is to relax

Imperial control as a measure of justice to Indians, there is a superficial contradiction in the statement that fully to discharge our duty to the native of Africa, Imperial control must in large measure be retained.

The responsibility which lies upon the British voter is, to put it very briefly, the protection of the native, and, again to put it in an over-simplified form, native rights are not safe in the hands of a small white settler minority. The settlers themselves have a hard struggle for a livelihood and in that struggle the interests of the weaker party are likely to receive scant consideration. A small minority of whites living in a much larger community of coloured folk are likely to develop an intense anti-colour complex, fed in part by racial antipathy, in part by fear. Where there is no considerable group of actual settlers, where the problem is one of nursing a people still in its childhood towards civilisation, by a detached and remote Imperial power, the problem is simpler. The officials have not a direct personal interest in native exploitation which is often such a temptation to a community of planters and settlers. Nor, indeed, where a white community is purely a trading one need there be much clash with native interests; for in the long run, the extent and prosperity of the trade will depend upon the prosperity of the native. Thus in West Africa the native has developed freely and prosperously along lines of his own. In densely settled areas like Nigeria and on the Gold Coast, British policy has adapted itself to native forms of cultivation and devoted itself to improving the native's economic position by securing better outlets for his produce. The British reward comes in this case as a merchant's profit on the expanding supply of materials produced by the natives, and there is no such conflict of White Settler *v.* Coloured Native as exists in territories like Kenya.

It is extremely important that the British public should not be misled by an apparent contradiction. In the case of the territories of East Africa the relinquishment of Imperial control is not a step towards democracy and freedom. It may well be a step towards the economic and political oppression of the native by a tiny white minority.

It is not a question, of course, concerning merely the settlers on the one side and the natives on the other with which we have no right to "interfere". British blood and effort and the money of British taxpayers, have been spent in the acquisition of these territories ; British power has protected, British money has developed, them ; and British soldiers will be killed and British wealth expended if these conflicts develop. It is mere nonsense, therefore, to talk as though the Home Government were unconcerned and had no rights.

Unhappily so often of late the dexterity and tact of the Home Government has fallen so far behind the excellence of its motive as to raise the question whether the English race is losing its genius for government. (Or was that never anything more than a myth originating in national complacency ?)

Other empires had and have their troubles : revolts, costly repressions, the hostility of rival powers, the hatreds of oppressed peoples. But this was the price paid, it was presumed, for some supposed benefit derived by the Imperial power. But the characteristic of the British Empire as we know it to-day is that, having made material concessions to its constituent parts of a kind and degree unknown to any empire of the past, and not made by any other great empire now existing, it nevertheless manages to provoke a degree of hostility and resistance, and to call down upon itself a volume of hatred, of criticism

from world opinion, which other great powers administering their empires on far less liberal principles seems all but completely to escape.

France, for instance, has an immense tropical empire in Africa and Asia. No part of it enjoys either the political or fiscal autonomy that has long been familiar to British Dominions. The tariffs of all French colonies without exception are arranged frankly with a view to what is deemed to be the commercial interests of the mother country.

Yet though French imperial practice will not in liberality bear comparison with the British, France faces neither in Africa nor Asia a tithe of the hostility or difficulty which Britain faces in India, for instance. The American Press does not resound with denunciations of French method in Syria, or Algeria, or Indo-China. Why does the liberal policy fail where the less liberal succeeds—succeeds, that is, in the sense of avoiding either the resistance to its authority or the creation by reason of its imperial position of a hostile foreign opinion?

This phenomenon is well illustrated in the case of Palestine. In assuming the mandate, no motives of "imperial exploitation" could have entered, or have been alleged against Great Britain. Some strategic interest Britain may have on the score of the protection of the Suez Canal, but any material commercial advantage in the occupation of the country is obviously ruled out. Indeed, sections of British public opinion (e.g. the Rothermere Press) violently opposed the assumption of the mandate at all precisely on the ground that there would be no material advantage whatever attached to it, and that it would prove an expensive luxury. In other words, it was a case where the science of government could be

applied without the interference of ulterior motive, and where it would seem that Britain might safely look for some measure of recognition and gratitude.

What is the result to-day? Would it be an exaggeration to say that in the minds of millions of the Jewish people throughout the world, millions who in banking, finance, trade, journalism, are in positions seriously to embarrass British world policy and interests, a certain measure of contempt and distrust has been added to dislike? It came as a shock to the millions of Jewry when in a territory entrusted to the supposed securities of British rule there broke out pogroms more murderous than those which used to shame Poland. The world was genuinely astonished. Alien peoples don't as a rule like British rule, but heretofore it has always meant, by general admission, security and order. There followed, in due course, a stinging reproof of British methods from the institution whence Britain derived her authority to govern Palestine—from the League of Nations, through the Mandates Commission. Bad as was the general impression at that date, much worse followed after the declaration of policy contained in the White Paper accompanying Sir John Hope Simpson's report.

That statement of policy was, in the view, not alone of Zionists, who might be accused of entertaining extravagant hopes or prejudiced views of what the British obligation is, but of very many Englishmen, in contradiction with the solemn undertakings of the Balfour Declaration. It is noteworthy that not only did Lord Rothermere rejoice that the Balfour Declaration was dead and buried, but men like General Smuts, Mr. Stanley Baldwin, Sir Austen Chamberlain. and Mr. Lloyd George came, not with satisfaction but obviously deep regret and misgiving, to the same conclusion.

Now the most serious fact in the situation is that public opinion as a whole in Britain was very little disturbed by the possibility that, in the view of very many, Britain had repudiated the "scrap of paper" by which she undertook to see through a certain purpose. This attitude of complacent indifference implies that in its absorption with other things the British public, and consequently many public men (for the Public Man is as a rule a reflection of the Public Mind) have failed to realise the nature of the task the country undertook in Palestine, or the way in which a hostile Jewry world can embarrass vital British interests, or the depths to which a repudiation of the obligations of the Balfour Declaration would cause British prestige to fall.

The assignment to Great Britain of the task of creating a Jewish National Home ; of reconstituting in one sense a nation whence Christendom took its religious literature and inspiration ; of becoming the keeper of the Holy Places, not alone of the whole Christian world, Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, but of Jewry and Mohammedanism as well ; of being regarded as in some sense protector of the sacred treasures and religious ideals of those astonishing people now scattered throughout the world ; the instrument through which the Western world proposed to make amends for oppression and injustices of long centuries—that Britain should be chosen for this task was surely as romantic a thing as has ever happened in history. One would have supposed it would stir the imagination of an imperial people, to whom romantic imperialism is supposed to appeal. But our erstwhile Imperialists of the Rothermere school merely asked, "What are we going to get out of it?" And when, having, in their view, thrown up the job we undertook, they rejoice and, though the history of Irish hate throughout the world

and its bedevilment of British policy is hardly yet closed, are plainly oblivious to what it means thus to have wounded the deepest sentiments of a people who occupy in every dominion, in every colony, in every country of the world, strategic positions of influence and power. Just twenty-four hours after the publication of the Palestine White Paper, a New York despatch to *The Times* quotes an American Jewish leader as saying : " We can and will create in this country an anti-British movement among the Jews of America, which will be more widespread, more powerful and more dangerous to Great Britain than ever Sinn Fein was at the height of its political power."

We may plead, of course, doubtless with some justice, that Zionists took too tragic a view ; that doors were not shut and bolted in the way that they supposed. But the point is that since many Englishmen interpret the document much as Jews interpret it, colour at least was given to that interpretation, and that we must now face the misunderstanding, the charges of bad faith, the loss of moral credit and prestige that it engendered ; and that to the long list of hostilities which British policy faces must now be added some measure of Jewish misgiving.

Where there is no Vision . . . The Palestinian problem has been handled as though it were a Palestinian problem, a dispute between rival groups in an Asiatic province, with an obligation on the part of the minority therein to cede to the claims of the majority. That is why the management of it has miscarried. It is not a Palestinian problem, but a world problem, and the "majority interest" here involved is the interest of Christendom as a whole in settling its ancient feud with a dispossessed people and making some amends for age-old

offences of the West against that people. Had it been necessary, in order to carry out the task entrusted to us, to provide by biggish schemes of land purchase for Arab outlet and settlement east of Jordan in order to permit a Jewish inlet from the west, the wealth of Jewry would have been forthcoming for such a project. But the problem has not apparently been conceived on that scale at all: it has remained, in the official mind, one of the settling of disorders in a not very important Asiatic outpost.

The Jewish question was, and is, a world question, if only because offences against the Jewish race are common to nearly the whole Western world. Anti-Semitism is a moral attribute of that Nationalism which we have all alike nursed. The homelessness of the Jewish people made the problem a more difficult one, and the upheaval of the Great War and the settlement of the world in some measure on new lines seemed to furnish an opportunity for the non-Jewish peoples to make some sort of retribution in co-operating to create a Jewish home, which so large a part of the Jewish race desired. The Balfour Declaration was a wise and entirely defensible act of statesmanship, not less defensible because this contribution to the solution of the Jewish problem ran parallel with British Imperial interest.

The Arabs of Palestine, in their objection to the creation of a Jewish home in that country, invoked the same unworkable principles of "independence" and "self-determination" which have threatened to shatter European unity everywhere. The Arab thesis is a simple one. Arabs are in a majority. The country is "theirs". They are entitled to be ruled by their own people. The making of their country a national Jewish home was, therefore, a violation of democracy, independence, nationalism,

self-determination, as well, they allege—though here wrongly—of promises made to them by the British Government.

It will be noted that very wisely the Jews do not demand "independence" for the Jewish home, the right, that is, to live under a government of their own people. They demand an impartial government in which their community and special cultural traditions and qualities can be freely developed side by side with those of other elements in the population. The day has passed when it is possible for every group, religious and racial, to govern itself. You cannot govern Catholics by Catholics, Protestants by Protestants, Jews by Jews, Moslems by Moslems, Baptists by Baptists, Celts by Celts, blonds by blonds.

Not the least service that the Palestine Mandate may perform is, that, if successful, it may be a forerunner of a type of government which will be more and more necessary, in some form or other, in various parts of the world. The Government of Palestine is not a British Government, nor a Jewish Government, nor an Arab Government. It is government. If one must give it an adjective, "impartial" should be the description towards which it should strive.

Its history has been a disappointment. Pogroms are a new characteristic of administration under the British flag; they are certainly not in the British tradition. But bitter as the disappointment is, there can be no question of throwing up the sponge and of surrendering the Mandate. The assumption of the Mandate was a great responsibility and a great honour. Its surrender would be fatal to British prestige in the only good sense of the word. The mistakes must be remedied; the blot upon the British escutcheon cleaned, and the job which Britain

deliberately assumed and which, properly performed, will make a real contribution to the difficult problem of human government along new lines, must be carried through to its necessary end.

CHAPTER II

THE STRUGGLE FOR BREAD

Although the main objective of the national power for which we all struggle is supposed to be to ensure sustenance, bread, the chief trouble of recent years has arisen not from the tendency of nations to keep their wealth to themselves but to being too generous with it. Some notes on the psychology of tariff making.

ONE of the strangest comments which the facts pronounce on the theory of war as the necessary struggle for sustenance, is that practically all the acutest national quarrels of late have been due, not to a desire to withhold wealth from the rest of the world, but, with the topsy-turvydom that marks this subject, to too great a readiness of certain states to part with their wealth, and to refusals to accept the wealth of others.

No cause is so great a source of bitterness as tariffs. What is a tariff? Is it a form of struggle in which one party tries to take the goods of the other? Not at all. It is the exact reverse. One party is too generous with its goods (so the other alleges); would dispose of them with too few goods in exchange. So much so that the second party says: "We will take measures to see that your resources are closed to us, by shutting out your products." Do we quarrel with Russia because she will not make her natural resources—her wheat and timber and hides—available to the world, or only available if we give her a disproportionate quantity of our goods? Not at all. Russia says in effect: "You shall dip freely into our

resources ; we will let you have our wheat and timber and hides and ask extremely little in return." And thereupon the world talks of war.

Nothing that the Russian Soviets have done so far has so much angered the British economic nationalist as the alleged dumping of Russian wheat in Britain. The idea that Russia is prepared to make this country a present (for that is what the accusation amounts to) of a certain number of tons of food every year is declared to be an act so malicious, so unfriendly, as to have set up the demand for the rupture of diplomatic relations forthwith. An exactly similar explosion marked the sending of Russian timber into the United States.

But while the offer of the produce, the wealth, of other countries creates this anger, no bitterness or quarrel would arise if a great nation, say Russia, were to say to the world :

Henceforth we will send you none of our wealth or the fruits of our soil. That is to say, we will cease all competition in your markets. But we will take your goods ; we will open our markets freely to anything you care to send, paying with such gold as we may be able to produce, or by any other means which you may be able to devise for us.

Such a declaration would be regarded with complete equanimity by the rest of the world. Most captains of industry would heave a sign of relief ; no State would dream of protesting.

Yet what would such a declaration mean ? It would mean that the State in question had said to the world in general :

You shall henceforth be shut off from all access to our vast natural resources. The world may need the product of our factories, our forests, our seas, and rivers. The world shall not have them. But we shall take all of your wealth that we can.

Yet that would cause no dangerous international situa-

tion ; promote no quarrel. It is only when a State proposes to give us plentifully of her wealth, not when she proposes to keep it, that we quarrel.

The offence of which we accuse Russia is that in exchange for what we give her in the way of machinery and manufactures she gives in return too much ; her foodstuffs are too cheap ; not only does she give full weight, the criminal wants to throw in additional handfuls to each sack that she delivers, for good measure. And for that we accuse her of desiring to smash all established order. If there were barter, as there will be one day, operated by means of a single agency of sale and purchase on both sides, that absurdity will disappear. Russia needs a given quantity of rails, locomotives, rolling stock ; she is to deliver in return so much foodstuffs. Are we then going to plead that she give us as little as possible ? Threaten her with diplomatic rupture if she has the effrontery to offer too much in return for those cargoes of manufactures ? We shall of course try and get as much as possible ; and the danger of war, because the purchaser of our goods is offering too good a price, will disappear.

Of course the whole absurdity is a part of that Protectionism which creates a sense of conflict of interest where fundamentally there is no conflict ; makes us fear, not scarcity, but plenty ; makes the fruitfulness of the earth an economic disaster ; makes us hate neighbours, not because they desire to take the fruits of our toil, but because they desire to make the fruits of their toil available to us. It creates an inversion of reality, an Alice in Wonderland topsy-turvydom in economics.

What moral is to be drawn from the fact that, as cures for many of the social and political ills from which we

suffer, men turn first, most naturally and instinctively, to remedies which are bound to make them worse ; to an intensification of the very causes from which the ills have arisen ?

Take the two outstanding problems of Western civilisation : the search for national political security and for economic security, some remedy for depression, unemployment. The political insecurity of each of us arises from the fact that others are highly armed. The remedy to which each turns first—and last—is to arm more highly. It is no remedy ; it must make the evil worse. And everyone does it. Take our economic insecurities, instabilities, depressions, and unemployment. By universal admission the whole problem is made immensely more difficult by the artificial barriers to trade, tariffs, and the absence of certain international agreements. The remedy to which everywhere nations are turning in their difficulties is more barriers, and intenser economic nationalism and the repudiation of economic internationalism.

So strong, so instinctive is this resort to economic nationalism that belief in the cure defies the plainest evidence. Protection has not prevented unemployment in countries like Germany and America, where it is pretty nearly as bad as in England. But the new Protectionist in Britain has an unshakable faith that it is bound to restore prosperity here ; to do for Britain what it has completely failed to do where it has been persistently applied.

Motives of less instinctive character enter in, of course. One is common alike to the European Union and the Economic Empire ; the need of modern large-scale industry for large units without customs barriers, such as the United States or Germany, and the need of equality

of economic power with big units like the United States. The projects of the European Union and the British Union are both in a sense directed at the United States or have arisen because of the manifest advantage which the United States enjoys from the fact of being the greatest Free Trade area in the world. And if the projects had serious chances of success it might be argued that the result justified the risks and costs. If the world were made up of three or four big fiscal units—the United States, the British Empire (including India), the European Union and Russia—it might be easier to secure working arrangements between that small number than it is between a very large number of small units. For this reason there is something to balance against the charge made so often that the European Union is directed against the United States or the British Empire. Even if it were, the result of its formations would not necessarily make the problem of agreement more difficult. The sheer number of units at present makes the problem stupendous.

If new frontiers to which tariffs can be applied continue in the name of Nationalism to multiply, and if tariffs are to mount ever higher as they have been doing (e.g. the American and Australian and Indian), you will get not only a world in which, as a mere incident, the economic position of a State like Britain will become impossible, but a world in which the rivalries and collisions are bound to end in war. Vaguely Europe as a whole, clearly some of its statesmen, like M. Briand, see that if modern industry is to achieve its purpose of giving to the population of Europe the standard of life which it might have and which the peoples have begun to ask of civilisation, then economic as well as political understandings must be achieved, if necessary by the stage of groups. Doubtless that realisation lies behind

M. Briand's project, though it may seem a rather long way round to the desired goal.

It is not necessary to deal in absolutes. It is sometimes said : " There can never be a peaceful world until we get universal Free Trade." But, until yesterday, we had peace as between the nations of the British Commonwealth without Free Trade ; and a vast trade between all nations of the world has grown up, we have developed from a national to an international economy, despite the tariffs. Most tariffs nullify themselves in the course of a few years. But for that very reason there is an inevitable tendency for tariffs to increase, until you get to the stage of prohibition of foreign imports, which the Australian tariff in some of its provisions has very nearly reached. It is this extreme form, and the instability of tariffs just at a time when certain characteristic developments of modern industry make stability of greater importance than it has ever been, which provoke an exasperation apt to give to economic nationalism a degree of heat which is fatal to peace.

Few situations are so productive of friction and irritation as those in which each pursues a course which he deprecates in others. No Protectionist looking at the increase of barriers to international trade says that the cure is more barriers. He proposes to add to them only because others, he explains, have already made his position impossible. It is like a run on a bank. In the general scramble the chance of individual salvation lies in scrambling more quickly than the others. But the whole problem arises because each acts upon that principle. The only hope is in general agreement for no one to do the thing which, if done by each, all are lost.

It is also sometimes argued : " Since the Free Trade Empire is altogether too fantastic ever to succeed, since

it is bound to fail, it can never be a danger to international affairs." But the attempt to create it involves meanwhile opposition to economic internationalism—or indeed any vital internationalism, as witness the opposition of Lord Beaverbrook's Press to any strengthening of the League. The achievement of the possible may be frustrated by the pursuit of the impossible. The seriousness of the Empire crusade is that it may withdraw British support from unifying tendencies in Europe at the precise moment when for their ultimate success they most need help, even though there be no conscious intention on the part of those who vote for Empire Free Trade to defeat the cause of internationalism.

Note how the individual interest is made to conflict with the general. A trade like textiles, cotton or lace, is suffering from depression and unemployment at a time when the country is importing quantities of textiles, cottons or lace. A victim of the depression or unemployment in, say, textiles asks the question: Will a tariff on foreign textiles help the British textile industry and lessen unemployment therein? And to that question, if the answer is to be Yes or No, the most convinced and passionate Free Trader must answer, Yes. Now that is as much of the rather complex problem of fiscal policy as really interests the textile worker out of employment or the mill-owner whose property threatens to go into bankruptcy. A tariff on the thing which he produces will benefit his particular trade. That is enough for him. After that he does not really listen when the Free Trader goes on to explain that when the other industries of the country have obtained their tariff, when by the cutting off of the foreigner's sales to Britain the foreigner's capacity to buy from us has been correspondingly lessened and both foreigner and Briton are being forced to devote capital

and labour to purposes which are not naturally the most productive—that when that has happened, which it will, and must if Protection is once entered upon, the last state of the country as a whole will be worse than the first. All that is far more difficult to follow than the simple proposition that “a tariff on the product of my industry will benefit that industry.” Especially as at election time the claimant to a tariff will have with him the very consumers who will pay for the benefit. For the foreigner is to be hit ; and every normal and healthy man likes to see foreigners hit ; and is prepared in a general, though not a specific, way to pay for the luxury. When Mrs. Smith goes into a shop to buy an alarm clock or a pair of stockings and the foreign article is half a crown cheaper than the British, she will without a tremor of conscience invariably buy the foreign (if it were not so, tariffs would not be necessary). Still more, when Mr. Smith buys a motor car and finds that he can save twenty pounds by buying the American, he does so. But both Mr. and Mrs. Smith will vote enthusiastically to keep out foreign goods, “in a general way”.

That is why nearly every country in the world is Protectionist. It is due to very special circumstances that Britain has adopted a Free Trade policy and has adhered to it for the best part of a century. When Britain had Protection it was mainly the means by which an already rich landowning aristocracy taxed the peoples of the cities through the price of bread. Free Trade became associated, therefore, in the minds of the million with resistance to feudal oppression and abundant food for the people. The association became a tradition and it is this tradition, far more than any other understanding of the Free Trade argument, which has maintained Free Trade in Britain. It explains alike the extreme hesitation

of Mr. Baldwin to pronounce outright the fateful words "a tax on food". That is one of the incantations of politics which may raise the devil for politicians. It explains also Lord Beaverbrook's use of the words "Free Trade" when Empire Free Trade means, in so far as it has precise meaning, intensified Protectionism.

The theory held by the Protectionist of each area is something like this: It is to the general advantage that the trade of each area should, as far as possible, go on as between the inhabitants of that area. But what constitutes the particular area is not the fact that economic conditions, such as the distribution of complementary raw materials, makes that area a natural economic unit, but that it has been made a political unit by historical circumstances and the economics should be made artificially to fit that political fact. Sometimes it is such things as religious differences which create the separate political grouping, as in Ireland. Southern Ireland is a separate unit because its people as distinct from the North are mainly Catholic. It has a tariff to coincide with the political and religious boundary. Catholic must trade with Catholic. If Baptists and Methodists had been distributed geographically presumably we should have had tariffs to protect Baptist trade as against Methodist trade, as we have tariffs to protect Belgian against Dutch.

This has something more than academic interest, for Protectionism grows by reason of motives the real nature of which are often ill-understood by those who obey them. An Indian Nationalist the other day demanded complete fiscal autonomy because he said, among other reasons, he desired to "protect Indian civilisation from the industrialisation of the West". He was therefore in favour of a stiff tariff against British goods. Yet the effect—and object—of that tariff is to industrialise India, to

enable Indian cotton mills to replace British. It is obvious that if his real motive, as distinct from that which he doubtless sincerely believed to be his motive, was to prevent the industrialisation of India, he would oppose Protection for India, the effect of which would grow up behind the Indian Tariff. Had he desired to maintain the agricultural character of Indian civilisation he would have desired that as far as possible the necessary manufactures should be made outside India and that India should pay for those manufactures by its agricultural products. He desired a tariff which should permit of the creation of Indian industries, because by the kind of impulse which marks Nationalism the world over, he resented the use of foreign products, either as a sort of reflection upon his own people or as giving foreigners a profit which ought to be kept for his own people.

Psychology has taught us that we use reason mainly for the purpose, not of finding what it is reasonable to do, but of finding reasons for doing what we want to do. We use it, that is, for making the promptings of instinct and emotion appear reasonable. Certainly in the motives behind the vindictive and fanatical Nationalisms, Hitlerisms, Fascisms, Communisms, of our world of to-day there is far more of the desire to satisfy some hungry emotion—of retaliation, resentment, fear, partisanship, herd instinct, sheer irritation and impatience—than of conviction that any particular one of those movements would find a remedy for our ills. In our anger and sense of impotence at the way things go, we are relieved if someone, something, can be found to blame. Hitler offers the Jews, the Nationalists everywhere offer the foreigner, the Communists offer "the capitalist class". A state of mind is satisfied, however little of solution may be found.

In other words, the problem is not at its foundations an economic or technical one, but one of human nature and its most elementary discipline. Technical and economic knowledge are necessary. But the world to-day has no difficulty in finding and organising that type of knowledge. But whenever it makes possible some advance there is immediately an effort to cancel it, to make it ineffective, by raising artificial barriers, like tariffs, by that economic Nationalism which results in the absurdities sketched above, so that we all become afraid of that very plenty which our technical knowledge makes possible.

The ultimate reason why we are unable to avail ourselves of the high productivity which physical science offers us, the reason indeed of "over-production", the glut which produces unemployment, is that we have failed at the point of social organisation. "General over-production" means, of course, "general under-consumption", the failure, that is, to adjust production to consumption, or consumption to production; the man to the job, and the job to the man. It can no longer be done automatically, as the *laissez-faire* advocates so long argued. Even such things as the gold standard, clung to because it was felt to be an automatic control of currency fluctuations, no longer works without conscious regulation which, as the report of the League of Nations Gold Commissions has shown, must be an international regulation. And in devising that kind of economic internationalism one runs immediately into all the difficulties of the Nationalist outlook, which difficulties are in their turn due so largely to ill-disciplined instinctive impulses and—it must be added—sheer ignorance of the necessary mechanism of human society. When educated men—like the highly educated men of the Prussianised upper classes of pre-war

Germany—disparage internationalism and seriously propose that in our modern world nations should remain completely “independent and sovereign”, one gets the impression that, say, a railroad manager might get if some old country gentleman were to propose that engine-drivers ought to be allowed to use their own judgment when to start and stop their trains. Not only is there no discipline of anti-social instinct, but there is no intellectual perception of its need. If you have a community where bad habits, drunkenness and passion are rife there is nevertheless hope for them if in their sober moments they say: “We must really put the brake on these bad habits, they are ruining us.” If that attitude is general in the long run they will come out of their disorder. But if each lauds his own conduct as fine and manly and of the highest virtue, and simply refuses to admit that it plays any part at all in the general unsatisfactory condition, there is no hope. So long as that moral imperception continues the disorder will continue. The trouble with the international community is that, distraught and riven as it is by Nationalist impulses, each nation is nevertheless encouraged by its historians, writers, poets, educationists to regard its own Nationalist impulses as entirely good and moral. Nowhere do we find developed as part of European education any commonly recognised code, some elementary grammar of human co-operation, enabling the layman to perceive when his Nationalism has overstepped the bounds and become an anti-social force.

A certain Professor of Economics made the other day a suggestive remark in connection with the study of his subject. He said that before attempting to read any economics at all students should spend a year studying such subjects as elementary law, ethics, the history of

slavery, of religious persecution, the social effects of new inventions and discoveries, the history of sanitation and epidemic diseases—with the idea of getting some notion of “the mechanism of human co-operation”, of human interdependence; of the kind of difficulty into which men run in their attempts to organise life together.

Without a sense of those difficulties, economic knowledge, the knowledge of finance, currency, what you will, is an abstract and useless erudition. What does it avail us that the economists should say: “Pull down your barriers,” or the currency experts: “Organise internationally your use of gold,” when strong emotions of Jingoism or class hatred, quite as rampant in the educated as in the “uneducated” classes, render inevitable a line of policy which makes those remedies utterly impossible, and when the “educated” are incapable of seeing the relation between the development of a Nationalist diplomacy and the failure of international organisation?

CHAPTER III

PATRIOTISM *v.* WELFARE

A consideration of some of the temperamental factors of disintegration in Germany and elsewhere. Do we fight foreigners because we do not like some of their characteristics, or dislike those characteristics because we want to fight foreigners? Some of the pre-war "aims of the war" in the light of post-war events.

WHY should economic depression seem to bring with it everywhere but in the English-speaking world—and in some degree there—strong anti-democratic or nationalist tendencies manifested now in Spain or Spanish America by military revolution; now in Germany by nascent movements towards dictatorship, or in Poland by actual dictatorship—as the Italian dictatorship followed economic breakdown? "Democracy in Europe", as one observer remarked some time since, "has been driven to the seaboard". Another observer, noting the trend, has predicted: "Let the price level fall another twenty points and Europe will be divided between Fascist and Communist dictatorship."

But why? Why should the sober middle classes of a country like Germany, desiring, one would have supposed, above all steadiness and reliability in politics, after having seen the wealth, the very existence indeed, of their order all but destroyed by militarist Nationalism, turn, as the remedy for the ruin thus produced, to Hitlerism—a form of militarist Nationalism wilder and less responsible than that so recently repudiated of the Kaiser and

his satellites? Is it really believed that the type of demagoguery which Hitlerism implies—anti-Semitic Mussolinism of an imitative and amateur kind—can handle the immense complexity of the situation which the war has left in Germany?

Why should economic depression exacerbate Nationalism, as it seems indubitably to do?

That is the case in Germany, where a curious psychological degeneration seems to have set in.¹ The Nazis have again become noisily menacing; strikes multiply; financial difficulties become acutely sharper. Nearly everywhere in that country now one hears prediction of "Revolution in the spring"; of the crises which may suddenly arise in the relations with Poland; or with the League over disarmament. Just at the moment when for the first time in ten years a Disarmament Conference really begins to take shape, the German public seems suddenly to have lost all patience and shows a tendency, having waited for ten years, to quarrel somewhat petulantly, sometimes over such futile details as to whether the date should be fixed a few weeks sooner or later. There is indeed a movement to smash the League by leaving it, to revert to the old anarchy.

Farther East the reconstitution of society from the bottom goes on in spasms of almost maniacal energy; and there seems a chance at last that, at vast cost in the surrender of moral and intellectual freedom, this experiment may succeed on the material side. That itself, which in healthy conditions should be a subject of rejoicing, as throwing light upon what is possible in the way of economic reconstruction, and as revealing the lines along which society might be recast, becomes in the actual circumstances of unrest in the West but an added cause

¹ Written in the autumn of 1930.

of fear ; the fear that in this time of poverty and uncertainty, when there are so many malcontents and disturbers, some measure of success in Moscow may prove a signal to some of those malcontents to pull away the pillars, to produce sheer chaos in order that from the ruins we may build afresh.

On the other side of the world, in America, misfortune does not seem to have brought change for the better in the general public attitude to co-operation with civilisation as a whole. The move towards joining the World Court, which at long last seemed on the eve of success, has once more been checked. The hostility to even so tentative a piece of internationalism as this is seemingly as great as ever. And while America thus refuses to aid or strengthen the institutions of international co-operation, she does a great deal to strengthen the instruments of Nationalism ; although it is Nationalism and its instruments which so very recently brought the world so near to ruin. The proposed participation in the World Court raised immediate, enormous, vocal and successful opposition. But the increase in the tariff, the raising to a still higher level the existing economic barriers against the rest of the world, the vote of enormous sums upon naval construction, had behind it forces so strong that the President himself could not check them.

As to European union, political or economic, Monsieur Briand's efforts almost everywhere, and particularly in this country, are received with scepticism and an underlying hostility. To this move are accredited the worst, not the best motives. A great Liberal newspaper thinks it necessary to imply that M. Briand is merely trying to recreate the Protocol of 1924 (it having become a habit in many quarters to flourish that document as a sort of political bogey. Just as in America at one period it was only

necessary to say " Monroe Doctrine " to justify any policy, however outrageous, so now it is only necessary to say " Protocol " in order to conjure up in the minds of millions who have never read the document, could not describe it, have not given one hour's thought to it, a vague hostility and sense of danger).

There is no sense or safety in shutting our eyes to the forces that make for confusion, helplessness and chaos, nor in minimising those forces. A great deal is to be gained by facing them and critically examining them. Criticism and scepticism is an attitude commonly recommended to the easy optimist. But it is every bit as indispensable for the easy pessimist. Indeed at this moment it is an obligation of the responsible and intelligent citizen to examine coldly and objectively the real reasons for his pessimism. And this examination should go far deeper than the mere taking cognisance of the facts themselves, of the events. The analysis should be driven to the point of asking why the facts and why the events.

Let us for a moment assume the worst, and imagine that the aftermath of the last war is to be exactly similar to the aftermath of previous wars in so far as any progress towards internationalism is concerned ; that the whole effort is destined to fail ; that any form of federalism or any kind of orderly political union of the nations is as impossible as the would-be " realist " so continually assures us that it is.

Let us assume, further, that the now commonly predicted German revolution follows the Russian ; that German Communism is supported from the East ; Polish barbarities win their natural reward of Ukrainian revolts ; that both movements rally to themselves the aid of an army that may well be to-day one of the greatest, if not the greatest of military instruments in Europe ; that at

such a stage Germany will not so much have seceded from the League as forgotten it, as the rest of Europe may well have done by that time.

Let us even include, in our cheerful forecast, the imminent break-up of the British Empire, an assumption for which the realist will find plenty of ground in the Indian scene. For plainly, repression may well prove beyond the economic resources of an island whose overseas trade seems steadily to disintegrate; and as India slips from British authority she may well slip into the chaos with which the Nationalist and independent China of late has made us so familiar. And, if you will, that the Australian monetary collapse is a prelude to that of other Dominions; that an African negro Nationalism follows the Indian. . . .

It may well happen and indeed, with no claims to prophecy at all, one may say with fair certainty that something like it will happen, if we are to accept the assumptions which are usually those of the "realist" who derides all efforts towards making the international future better than the past. Let us suppose that it has all happened. How would the historian of the future attempt to explain it? Part of his survey might run something like this:

Here was a Europe of some three hundred million souls, occupying a territory more suited for human habitation and wealth than any other part of the known world. The great extremes which bear so heavily upon man are here absent. The fecundity of the Tropics which for so long put Nature beyond man's control did not here curse him. Nowhere was he faced with the obstacles that face the European in North America. (On maps as late as 1860 or thereabouts, most of what is now the United States was described as "the great American desert".) Land and water are far better distributed for human purposes in Europe than in North America. Our Mediterranean has access from two oceans, is never closed by ice. Their Mediterranean has no such access, is closed most of the year by ice. It would not be difficult to establish a table of com-

parison in which while some of the advantages would certainly go to North America, a very large number would go to Europe.

Indeed there was never even any pretence that the obstacles to the fruitful and peaceful exploitation of European soil were physical obstacles. There was never even any pretence that there was a shortage of natural wealth. If the tools which their physical science had created had been used to the maximum capacity ; if the advantages of division of labour—the utilisation of each area for the product and purpose naturally suited to it—all the economies of large-scale production had been taken advantage of, the population could almost have buried itself in wealth. Some of their best economists, both communist and capitalist, wrote of these possibilities. Indeed, there emerges from the story two strange facts. The first is that in their periods of severe economic distress, enormous numbers, millions, stood idle, doing nothing to utilise the soil they inhabited, fed and supported by the others. The second fact is that no sooner did a country reveal some natural advantage in the production of some necessary food or material so that it was in a position to supply those things more easily than other countries, than others immediately erected artificial barriers in order to keep out those products and shut themselves off from those advantages. When large-scale production cheapened food in Russia, the other nations with panic haste proceeded to shut out that food, so that none of it should reach their hungry populations.

So it was no natural shortage, no Darwinian struggle for life, no biological contest of indefinitely increasing populations for slowly diminishing output that caused the breakdown. Nor can we say that it was a moral failure in the sense of indolence, lack of virility, degenerate ease, personal selfishness. For all the wars which brought about the collapse of this civilisation were marked by magnificent self-sacrifice, the sublimest heroism. It was not merely on the battle front that sacrifice and heroism were shown, but in the way in which the civil population starved and suffered in order to keep the wars going. Nor can anyone say that the passion displayed by the militant Nationalists of France, the Nazis of Germany, the Fascists of Italy, by the innumerable minorities which terrorised, assassinated, quarrelled, propagandised for the greater glory of their nations, was marked by avarice. Indeed, avarice is the last explanation that carries us very far. For the Europe of the twentieth century had before it two courses ; Unity and Riches, or Separatism and Poverty. It chose the poverty. It is difficult to see how "avarice" can explain a deliberate rejection of riches and a deliberate choice of poverty.

The historian may add—in the circumstances it might seem a reasonable conclusion—that plainly the people preferred war to wealth ; the satisfaction of tribal animosities to the organisation of an orderly society.

Yet we, "who are the history", know that to be a false conclusion. The people do not desire war. Nor, for that matter, do the governments, although there is a theory fairly widely held that for some fell—and unexplained—purpose of their own, governments are engaged in dragging reluctant and presumably helpless peoples into war. This very popular theory that governments foster warlike policies despite their peoples is worth a moment's examination.

It suffices to glance for a moment at the facts. Take France, so generally accused of war-like predilections. Two tendencies, personified respectively by Poincaré and by Briand, have marked French foreign policy since the war : Poincaré has represented the Chauvinist, anti-German line ; Briand the internationalist, conciliatory. But which of the two has been the surest of popular support ? In France itself Poincaré has represented the popular force, while M. Briand's patriotism has been suspect. It is only by the astutest management, by giving to his internationalism and conciliation a Nationalist aspect at home, that M. Briand has been able to hang on. Take Germany. Whence in that country comes the danger to the continuation of a policy of pacifism, conciliation ? From popular sources, from such popular tendencies as those expressed in the success of the Nazis at recent elections. Take Italy. Is the Chauvinism, the fist-shaking at other nations, of the Duce unpopular ? It is precisely because it is popular at home that he indulges in the warlike fireworks. Take the Balkan States. Are the various irredentist movements so pregnant of conflict popular, or unpopular ? Take aggressive Nationalism in Europe as a whole : the movement is essentially a popular movement.

But, it will be objected, if Nationalism, Chauvinism,

with its pugnacities and deep hostilities, nursing of prejudice, its sabre-rattling, is a popular force, how can it be argued that the people are not for war, since the one involves the other ?

The answer to that gets near to what is probably the real root of the trouble : The mass of folk simply do not see the relation between a given attitude or policy and its inevitable outcome in war, nor the fact, that manifestation of certain tempers will inevitably provoke similar tempers in neighbours and in the end produce war. A people like the French (though the same is true of all peoples on occasions) simply do not realise that if the policy which they pursue as a matter of course is also pursued by others, the end must be conflict. At this moment the French say :

Who can accuse us of desiring war ? Is there anything that we could gain by war ? Have we not suffered more by war than any other people whatsoever ? Accusations of warlike intention on our part must, therefore, be made in bad faith. Such accusations mask the desire of others to upset settlements, to put the *status quo* into the melting pot, to despoil us of the fruits of those settlements. Preponderance of power on our part, therefore, is a guarantee of peace ; that preponderance we shall

But the maintenance of the *status quo* involves the maintenance of the settlements imposed by the power of the sword, in a passion of retaliation, unjustly. In the past France has been immensely proud of having refused to accept such settlements ; of having bided her time for their correction, of having placed "justice before peace", of having refused to accept the preponderance of others as a permanent crystallisation of injustice.

Why, therefore, does she expect others to accept permanently a situation which she would refuse to accept, never has accepted in the past ?

Because that is the nature of Nationalism, and of the

Nationalist impulses everywhere and at all times. Other-mindedness, the basic assumption that other nations are like ours and will obey similar motives, are entitled to the rights we claim, is the very negation of the moral essence of Nationalism, which is exclusion, preference for our side, loyalty to our nation (whatever it may do or claim), not loyalty to some abstract principle which, if we apply it logically, may mean siding with foreigners against our nation.

Glance at the history of the irredentist peoples as displayed by the pre-war and post-war map of Europe. We had in the pre-war period peoples like the Italians, the Poles, the Bohemians, the Southern Slavs, making the heavens ring with their denunciations of the moral outrage, the infamy of compelling any national group to live under a Government which was not theirs. Did these Nationalists believe the principles which they were proclaiming so passionately? The very question would have been an offence to them: they had no doubt of their sincerity. They would have told you that they stood for simple and absolute right as against absolute wrong, foul injustice, the right and wrong unaffected by circumstance.

But in fact they believed nothing of the sort. For when the opportunity came to apply their principles, apply, that is, to others that which they had fought for themselves, they repudiated it completely. Every new nation did. There is not a new nationality in Europe, not one, that has not in lesser or greater degree repudiated the principle of nationality. The Poles, who have been in the past the most vociferous of all the exponents of the rights of nationality, have, since their own independence, outraged the principle more brutally, more callously than even their former oppressors did.

There is not, indeed, a single new national State that has not used the opportunity of victory to include within its borders alien minorities which would not have been included if the will of those minorities had been regarded. A missionary once asked a certain African chief whether he regarded wife-stealing as a criminal offence. The chief replied : " Of course. That is to say, if anyone takes my tribe's women, that is a crime ; if I take some other tribe's women that is not a crime."

The logic of Nationalism, as we see it at work in European politics, is of exactly that standard. Wherever it enters, it reveals the same naïve unilateral quality. " With eight more ships we shall be safe," shouted the Admirals ; in complete, in really sublime disregard of the fact that the preponderance which made us safe would make the other man unsafe ; that if he obeyed our motives he would retort with his new quota ; and that we should then be as unsafe as ever.

The admirals—on both sides—will tell you with truth and sincerity that they do not desire war. Yet both sides pursue a policy which must ultimately end in war.

Why ? Those thus guilty of disregard of self-evident fact are not fools ; they are often able, intelligent, as well as sincere men. Why then do they refuse to face truth ?

Partly perhaps because the facing of it, and action upon it, would land them in unfamiliar situations, involving not, it is true, greater risk than the old armament competition, but a different kind of risk ; and entirely new temperamental or psychological adjustments.

The old struggle was a struggle for mastery of one over the other. The alternative is a partnership the success of which demands free admission by each of the other's rights to equality ; the patient consideration of what each regards as detestable and inadmissible views ; the sur-

render of ground which each feels he has the power to hold.

Compare this emotionally unsatisfying situation with one which involves, above all, contest, rivalry, the free flow of the pugnacities that go with the old type of international life. In the old international order the parties enter upon a fight, a great game ; the dry warfare of armaments, or the other kind of warfare. As in every other fight or game, you might win, or you might lose ; that was the lottery of life and destiny. The instincts and emotions which surround activities of that kind come down to us over the long road from pre-human forest ages : every living creature through immeasurable time has pitted its skill in contest against some other living creature. Feelings with roots of that depth will seek satisfaction in public policy, where the sense of personal responsibility is watered down.

Nationalism, with its "ourselves above all others", "ourselves right or wrong", furnishes an opportunity for the savage in us to have his fling, which private life does not.

The vainglory, the humiliation of others, of which we would never be guilty as a personal quality, we can indulge vicariously as a national quality.

And, of course, we can indulge it more completely and more riotously as an oppressed nationality in the name of justice than in any other situation whatsoever. We have then no lingering doubt (which as an "imperial oppressor" we might have) of its complete moral justification. Our closely knit interdependent world has inherited the slogans about the "right of free people to be independent" which the entirely different, far-off ancient world (of say, about fifty years ago ; or of the eighteenth-century revolutionists) enunciated in its final war of

popular right—national right—against Feudal privilege. Any recognition of mutual obligation in the shape of organised co-operation between two distinct peoples—like the British and the Australians, or the British and the Indians, or the Poles and the Germans—always tends to be regarded by the one or the other as a survival of feudal oppression which must be terminated by the independence of each. Nationalism has thus spelled Balkanisation, disruption, disintegration—and the repudiation of itself, since, as we have seen, there never was a nationality which, while proclaiming independence for itself, did not deny the right of independence to distinct national groups within its frontiers, as the Germans have in the past denied the right of independence to Poles, and as the Poles to-day deny to Germans. All such parties, whether on top or underneath, wage their war for its own sake, for the sake of the contest and its emotional satisfactions, irrespective of any such human goods as prosperity, welfare, food, shelter, peace, kindness, and good-fellowship. A federalised Europe in which no one was independent because all had recognised their mutual obligations would be immeasurably richer in those goods than the distraught Europe we know.

Yet the tendency everywhere, alike within and without the Empire, is to choose separatism and poverty. Australia, facing a graver economic crisis than its history has ever known, in danger of bankruptcy and repudiation, and when every light link with Britain, which has supplied its capital and constitutes its chief market and means of recuperation, might advantageously be strengthened, chose this particular moment to sever one last remaining link with Britain—the British nationality of its Governor-General.

If Australians behave in that way we cannot be surprised

that Indians, with infinitely greater cause for resentment against men of British race, should place the cause of separatism above welfare ; stress so much the mystic value of an " independence " which, if good for Indian as against British, is as good (and will assuredly be asserted, is indeed being asserted) for Hindu as against Moslem, one caste against another, one race against another, the end of which is chaos. It is one of the tragic humours of the British-Indian situation that the Indian, shouting his determination to die for freedom from Western power, is enslaving himself to one of the worst forms of Western power, the power of such fallacies as an " independence " which, repudiating effective federalism with one's fellow-beings, proclaims the sovereignty of the National State ; and such fallacies as that democracy must be only one kind of democracy, based upon the omnibus vote of millions, deciding issues which quite obviously they have not, and in the nature of things cannot possibly have, any competence to decide. It is just when the West is perhaps beginning to see through these fallacies, and is making some blundering attempt to correct them, that India and other nations of the Empire are giving greater emphasis to them than ever.

Must we then accept all these forces of chaos as something outside our wills, like the rain or the earthquake ? It is because we tend to do that that they are dangerous. Those forces are ourselves, our ideas and attitudes of the past, strengthened by our present acquiescence in them. Immediately we forsake the fatalist assumption, realise that these forces *are* ourselves and act on that truth, they begin to lose their danger.

With reference to the ominous temper which has set in in Germany, this disposition to go back on the restraints

and patience of the last ten years, to withdraw from the League, arm, revert to the old alliance struggle, one has only, in order to see that it is stark madness, to ask the simple question : What, from the point of view of the German, are the risks of such a policy compared with the risks of patient co-operation with the League ? Abandonment of the League means challenge to France and Poland, the restarting of armament competition, the entry of Russia into the contest, and then, whatever the military outcome, the end of middle-class Germany which gives such strength as it has to this Nazi anti-League movement.

The other day a German merchant said mournfully, "The earthquake will destroy us," implying that the forces which threatened to overwhelm him were forces of nature outside his will. It turned out that he had voted with Nazis ; that many of his colleagues had done the same. Questioned, they spoke of "economic depression added to a sense of injustice". They were men in comfortable homes, all employing other men—clerks, workmen—compelled to live on incomes of a half or third or quarter or less of their own. When asked whether the difference between the economic situation of the German bourgeoisie as "victims" of the peace, and the economic situation of the victors of corresponding class, was anything like as great as the difficulties between the German bourgeois and the German worker's standard, the business men in question were, of course, compelled to admit that the difference within the German frontier was a vast gulf as compared to the hardly discernible difference between themselves and the bourgeoisie of other nations. Yet for the Communists who proposed to express their resentment at lifelong inferiority by battle and bloodshed, the business men could find no words of condemnation sufficiently strong. "Economic depression", lifelong in-

justice, expressed in real poverty and suffering, were not accepted, in the case of Communism, as impersonal forces which relieved individual communists from personal responsibility for the hates they nurtured and the killings they contemplated. Such acts, said these Germans, were evil deeds to which human responsibility attached. But if the feelings excited by the news that Germans in Silesia had not been permitted freely to vote resulted in war, the slaughter of women, children, helpless folk, who had nothing to do with the political squabble—ah ! here we are dealing with “ great cosmic forces ”, noble explosions of national wrath for which nobody, apparently, is responsible ; the rightings of deep wrongs for which any sufferings, any devastation may be risked.

This is not, of course, a specifically “ German ” temper. It is common enough in every country, including Britain. But a combination of circumstances happens to make its particularly dangerous manifestation in Germany just now. If certain British critics of the British Government had been taken at their word France would now be told to go to the devil, the abandonment of any Disarmament Conference at all would have been cheerfully welcomed, all commitments under the Covenant would have been cancelled, and then—well, what then ? At that point the critics stop. For them there is no sequel. They might argue half-heartedly that this reversion to a free-for-all scramble would not mean the resumption of the competition with the old results, but that would be an afterthought. As one of the critics put it : “ If I got news of the abandonment of the Disarmament Conference I should heave a sigh of relief as marking the end of a bad comedy, an era of sham.” He would, that is, get the same relief that he gets when he swears at golf, or breaks the furniture when his wife is really intolerable.

But we are not dealing with golf or an after-dinner domestic squabble. Yet, such is our unimagination, that we will show very much greater restraint, a far greater strength of responsibility, when dealing with our dinner guests than when dealing with the issues of peace and war.

"Peace is a dream ; war will recur," says the "realist", with a knowing "man of the world air" as though human choice had nothing to do with the recurrence. But it is a deliberately chosen recurrence, by definite men, men in a temper, in a passion of retaliation, desiring to satisfy that passion and refusing to face the cost of so doing. They can indulge their passion only because they can persuade themselves and their fellows to regard it as noble passion, a desperate fight for justice and the fatherland ; the furtherance of great ideas. If the multitude of men saw, what is the truth, that those ideas are evil ideas—anti-social, unworkable, selfish, an excuse for vanity and moral indiscipline ; if the recognition of that truth became so general that the display of those passions were looked upon as contemptible, it would then be found, such is the mystery of human nature, that the passions were quite controllable ; they would cease to be cosmic forces outside ourselves, and would come to be regarded for what they are, a breakdown of social discipline to be corrected as civilised society manages to correct lesser breaches. Temper, animal instinct, would be held in check until the civilised mind had managed to do its work.

It would almost certainly be better if the motives were intelligently more economic than they are ; for the desire for welfare, the security and well-being of one's children and people are better motives than the animal-like instincts of herd hostilities, the resentment at the presence of some "alien" element within "our" territory, the tribal megalomanias and vain-glory which too often

parade under the name of nationalism—if indeed political nationalism is not almost inevitably very nearly related to those things.

The highest economic welfare involves human co-operation to an elaborate degree, and that, in its turn, capacity for keeping a contract, goodwill, and good faith. But the nationalisms which have racked Europe the last two hundred years and threaten its civilisation, and now begin to rack the East, so easily slip into mere passionate retaliations, in which the desire to defeat an opponent, to compel him to admit defeat, to humiliate him, blinds its subjects to their own interest. It does not mean that they are other-regarding, but that, like the victims of other lusts, they prefer momentary gratification to permanent well-being. Desire for the welfare of one's own people is, after all, a more respectable motive than the desire for the injury of another people. You can reconcile the economic interest of separate groups because the division of labour, which is the essence of effective economic activity, makes them interdependent. But you cannot reconcile the desire of both to see the other humiliated or injured.

The essence of the difficulty alike in India, Palestine, Egypt, and in most centres of European unrest, is not material grievance, but "aspirations", the desire for *self-government* which means the government of "our" group, geographical or religious, as against another group. Where the economic question arises it arises generally out of a habit of attaching the economic interest to a group. The Arab speaks of being ousted by the Jew in Palestine. If those whom the Arab has in mind called themselves Mohammedans the question would not arise. Yet the same individuals would be occupying the same position as now: the economic situation would be

identical, but the group distinctions would be different. It is out of those group distinctions that the difficulty comes. There can hardly be a doubt that the economic position of the Arab worker has been improved by Jewish activity in Palestine. But so long as it is Jewish activity the economic improvement will be regarded as a grievance rather than as a blessing. So in India. The abiding curse of that country is poverty ; to remove it, needs the application of economic science, scientific administration, industrial and agricultural reorganisation. But Gandhi and his colleagues do not even profess to be economists or administrators ; they do not deny that British administrators would be of service in the task of fighting poverty nor that it is to Britain's obvious interest, with her need of markets, to raise standards in India and render her population capable of consuming British goods. The agitation does not concern itself with the poverty of India ; it starts from the standpoint that the very presence of British rulers in India is an indignity and an offence, and it buttresses this position by professing to feel that the westernisation of India would be too big a price to pay for the abolition of poverty, that India's " soul " and freedom and spiritual life would vanish in exchange for comfort.

One might be impressed by this last argument had not the years since the war in Europe revealed this curious truth : these imponderable, indefinable, elusive spiritual values may be proclaimed with apparently passionate sincerity by great masses of men, and then suddenly abandoned as of little worth. Thus, before the war the democracies of western Europe, while admitting that German organisation gave an efficient civilisation, inveighed against its autocracy, its deprivation of liberty, its regimentation, its police inspection, its militarisation,

"this cursed tramping and drilling", as destructive of all the highest human values. Free men, we were told, rose from the uttermost ends of the earth to give their all in defence of that which they valued above life itself—liberty and democracy, unfettered by Prussian regimentation. Recall for a moment the eloquence of our intellectuals on that point in the period about 1912-18: what the poets, poetasters, novelists, historians, journalists had to say on that theme. It is cruel to recall it, but wholesome. Very well. Having, at the price we know, made the world safe for democracy and freedom, the victory in the war having gone to the democratic side, there follows, among those victors, a veritable epidemic of dictatorships. Italy, it will be recalled, was one of the fighters for freedom and democracy. Mussolini now proclaims, that "with those stinking corpses" of democracy and liberty modern Italy will have nothing to do. And as to the militaristic ideas which the war was to destroy for ever, Mussolini, in his very latest outburst,¹ tells the world that "rifles, machine-guns, ships, aeroplanes and cannons" are far more beautiful things than words, and that Italy acts on the warning of Machiavelli that "unarmed prophets perish". In other words the fiercest of the Kaiser's little efforts in the direction of the sabre-rattling were but baby talk compared to the mildest of Mussolini's proclamations to Europe. Italy seems to like it, and every country has its group of Fascist imitators. And nobody worries in the least that the whole principle of liberty has gone by the board. Arnaldo Mussolini wrote recently: "We cannot tolerate opposition because opposition in the Fascist State is like a missing cog in an intricate piece of machinery. . . . Opposition must be stamped out as a poisonous weed." And so

¹ Written in 1929.

desolate islands are filled with political prisoners, men who have committed such carelessnesses as to express a passing criticism on the post-war order during a meal at which the waiter was a secret agent of the Fascist State.

It requires an effort of memory to recall that before the war a man could travel round the world without so much as a passport ; that most people never possessed such a thing. We read that now in certain of the "liberated territories" the citizen "must have a passport for each journey undertaken, and the foreigner's must be visa-ed for each railway journey undertaken. Generally three or sometimes five photos must be supplied for each pass." . . . In Britain itself, visiting Americans and other foreigners must report to the police every change of address, must obtain police permits to remain, must not accept any paid position save by special permit obtained with enormous difficulty from the Home Office and the Ministry of Labour. "Regimented" pre-war Germany knew nothing of this. In those days, when a young officer clouted an Alsatian shoemaker over the head, the country was in an uproar at such tyranny, and Europe took it as proof of the severity of the Iron Heel. The other day, in Republican Vienna, ninety people were killed in a fracas with the police, and Europe is completely undisturbed. The police official responsible becomes the Prime Minister. In the old oppressive days of Imperial Austria the police official who should have permitted one citizen to be killed in such circumstances would have found his career ended.

In a year or two we have become habituated to a degree of regimentation which would have shocked us and provoked rebellion before the war. It is accepted without protest by peoples who fought for political freedom, by peoples who, like the Italians, have proclaimed Liberty

as the thing for which they lived and died. It reveals the instability and elasticity of these values ; reveals also the fact that we deceived ourselves when we supposed that hatred of this regimentation was the deep and underlying cause of hostility to Germany. The hostility to Germany was the cause of our laudation of liberty. The cause of our hostility to Germany was fear of the growth of her power.

In his Hibbert Lecture at Oxford, Tagore, speaking of the difficulty between India and Britain, and indeed between the East and Europe, avows that he cannot indicate any short cut to relief, or any easy remedy. "What is most needed is rather a radical change of mind and will and heart."

All will agree, because each will interpret the recommendation in the fashion most convenient to himself. The terms are too indefinite. If we are to get precision at all we must be much clearer upon the most fundamental of all questions in connection with politics, the question as old as Aristotle, and still unanswered : "What are those values which it is the object of our political societies to promote?" Are we struggling for welfare, in the sense of adequate sustenance, health, security, comfort? Or less material things? And if the things are less material, are they things which can be universalised and reconciled with the material need? If each asks domination over the other, they cannot be universalised ; the thing could only be granted to one by denying it to the other. And if either refuse partnership (which could be granted to both) then it means probably a denial of the material things—food, life, comfort—which is the basis of any spiritual good.

These are very ultimate questions, seldom asked, still more seldom answered. They are not questions with

which the practical politician can deal. They must be settled outside politics, perhaps. But until more of us are clearer in our minds about these things, the political problem will remain insoluble.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEW SPIRIT AND THE OLD PROBLEM

What is the real significance of that flood of war books of the "realist" order which profess to take the glory out of war? How far will this new attitude to war carry us in the solution of problems which arise less from lack of goodwill than from lack of understanding? The outcome of Disarmament Conferences and the spirit of the Kellogg Pact.

WHAT hope do the achievements of the recent past in the international field give for the immediate future? The simple list of things accomplished this last year or two is an imposing one. The signature of the Optional Clause; the enormous improvement in the relations with the United States; the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Russia; the clearing up of much of the misunderstanding with Egypt; some improvement in the situation in India; further stages in the settlement of Reparations; the establishment of an International Bank; the evacuation of the Rhineland¹ . . . the list is endless.

But the most important achievement of all, one outweighing, if it is permanent, all the rest, may prove to be a certain subtle change of spirit and attitude, a change the profundity of which perhaps can only be grasped by those who fought in the peace cause before the war, and knew too well another attitude and another spirit.

The change is the more profound perhaps because those

¹ Since this was written a further list including war-debt moratoria and close American-British-French-German financial co-operation should be added.

in whom it is most marked are unaware of it. Do popular journalists who now clamour for British withdrawal from Iraq or Palestine, realise that twenty years ago they would have driven from public life any politician daring to suggest that the British flag should be lowered in any part of the globe where once it had flown—that the naval policy for which, for instance, the *Daily Mail* has been standing of late would have caused that paper to lynch anyone who had stood for it a quarter of a century ago?

Further evidences of this change are to be found in the popularity of the Kellogg Pact (upon the significance—and danger—of which a word or two presently) and the mass of novels and plays in disparagement of war which have appeared this last year or two. Both indicate a deep change of emotional attitude without which nothing could have been done at all. The Kellogg Pact at least did this: by it the nations repudiated formally and solemnly the ancient and heretofore highly orthodox doctrine of the “inevitability” of war. So long as mankind accepted war as part of the inevitable rhythm of life, a hardship to be faced like work, bad weather, illness or old age, and not as a vast human failing, the one great human evil which it was plainly and obviously within the will of man to abolish merely by the exercise of that collective will; so long as ruler, priest and teacher, writer, poet, orator, refused to face that elementary truth and decorated this vast folly with crowns and laurels, flags, orders, medals, songs; persistently, dishonestly hiding its meanness and bestiality—so long as all that was true nothing could be done. But because a given step is indispensable, because it is true to say that unless we take it nothing can be done at all, it is not consequently true to say that that step by itself will be enough. Yet

it is one of the curiosities of popular thinking and discussion to confuse the indispensable with the sufficient and to think that because a thing has been proven to be necessary, it is therefore in some astonishing way enough. A change in the emotional attitude towards war is assuredly indispensable, but just as assuredly it is not enough. And particularly is it true that a sudden realisation of the vileness of war is apt to obscure certain other truths about it. War assuredly is vile, but men do not engage in it because they are altogether blind to its vileness. Men engage in it because for the moment they see no other means of asserting what appears to them to be a right—the right to equality of world opportunity with others, the right to freedom from alien rule, the right to protect themselves and their people from bullying. When it becomes in men's minds a question of defending their rights, the horrors of war become irrelevant; indeed, the horrors make the act of war the more noble.

Think of the situation of a young man called upon as a member of his State to resent an insult to it, oppose an injustice, an oppression, and then tell him in the face of that that if he champions the cause of his country he will suffer—suffer gross hardship, filth, mutilation, death. What is the result in his mind? What is the effect of bringing into relief the horrors of war? The effect is to sanctify his act and his sacrifice.

That is why one is compelled with some misgiving to ask whether the net effect of the flood of war novels and war plays which have marked the last year or two will be to strengthen peace. In so far as they merely heighten the effect of war's horror they will, unless that horror results in something more than the stirring of the emotions, and prompts an effort to penetrate the moral and intellectual error which produces the situation out of which

war arises ; unless the emotional stirring has that effect, it will not necessarily do anything at all to lessen the likelihood of war, and it may increase it. Men do not dislike hardship, danger, the risk of death—witness some of their more expensive sports. They are certainly never deterred by those things from an act to which they are impelled by a sense of injury, resistance to injustice or by other strong passions. Nor, of course, do soldiers go to war from avarice. A man cannot well give his life, as so many soldiers at times willingly do, from hope of gain unless he is surer of his heavenly reward than men of the West are usually. You may, of course, get statesmen or capitalists plotting to produce war for their ends, but if the plot is to succeed it must include provoking in the minds of the public some sense of resistance to injustice, of resentment, some passion of retaliation, the need to vindicate honour. Whether capitalists desire war or not (and the idea that they inevitably and invariably do is one of the strange myths of this discussion), it is certain that they could not achieve their ends if they were compelled to say to the public : “ Please give your lives and those of your children in order that our dividends may be increased.” That motive, if it exists, must be disguised, as it always is disguised, so that war may seem at least a defence of the Fatherland, an assertion of its own rights, a defence of women and children, of “ girls in the golden city ” (for whom a poet laureate demanded war against two tiny farmer republics). War must be made to appear at least a “ fight for right ”, “ for our country ”, for defence. And once it is made so to appear, its horrors are an added stimulus. (The late Hiram Maxim once based a whole anti-pacifist campaign on pictures of women and children being blown to pieces by bombs, his conclusions being, as opposed to the pacifist :

"If you want to stop this kind of thing buy more Maxim guns." The late Lord Northcliffe, on seeing the dead bodies of some English lads in the trenches, said: "Some of these too-proud-to-fight-people ought to be brought here to see this.")

And it is not certain that we are free yet from this particular reaction to a hatred of war as such. The results of each Disarmament Conference as it comes along are disappointing in the extreme if one is to interpret that result as the acid test of men's dislike for war.

On the morrow of the London Naval Conference, a man very much in the centre of affairs, unusually well-informed, occupying a position which enables him to regard all these struggles from the point of view of a somewhat impartial spectator, wrote as follows:

Here we have the Labour Government, which before it came into power was saying that it meant business with disarmament and would see we got a First Lord of the Admiralty that could stand up to the admirals and sack the lot if necessary. And now . . . the Labour Government have not only failed to offer to abolish battleships (although expressing a pious hope coupled with a programme for smaller battleships after 1936!), but has stuck to the ridiculous doctrine that for some mysterious reason fifty cruisers are an absolute minimum irrespective of the navies of other Powers. Alexander seems to be taking a modest pride in the fact that he has got the admirals to agree to this doctrine instead of clinging to the even more fantastic figure of seventy—i.e. a number of cruisers that we have never possessed since the war.

The Americans, after Hoover's boast that they would go as low as anyone—it was just a question of how far the others were willing to go—are also clinging to the battleship and even want to build a new hefty one. The Americans and we are now squabbling about which of us will have more fighting power after we have "disarmed", and each is determined that it shall be as strong as the other just to illustrate the fact that we have both sworn that we will never in any circumstances fight each other!

The Japanese and Italians wish to increase their relative strength cheaply by reducing other people's navies more than their own.

As for the French, they have carried the whole swindle to lengths where it becomes delightfully comic—not least, no doubt, to themselves—when

they calmly demand in the name of disarmament a far bigger fleet than they have had since the war, on the ground that it is not yet as big as it was on the eve of the world war, and that they were so busy fighting the war that they had no time to prepare adequately for the next, and now wish to make up for the time lost.

On the whole I think the crown of the whole gorgeous foolery is Stimson's loudly expressed satisfaction at the impending agreement to "humanise" the conduct of submarine warfare. The Powers who have sworn they will never fight and that war is a crime, are now devising rules for the gentlemanly perpetration of this crime. It is as though a number of "gentlemen of the road" should meet and solemnly swear that they would never again commit highway robbery, and at the same time conclude an agreement that next time they went on the road they would use blackjacks and knuckledusters on their victims, and forswear pistols!

After all, in the next war both parties will be accusing each other of having violated the Covenant and the Kellogg Pact, and if, as the perpetrators of this submarine convention seem to take for granted, the League will have ceased to function and the Kellogg Pact be treated as a scrap of paper, it is surely an insult to anyone's intelligence to imagine that a convention on the conduct of submarine warfare will be respected for one single moment!

I have never felt so depressed since the Labour Government came in, for what is really serious is, that it is our crowd that have got themselves steeped in this iniquity. It means that the Tories will have a free hand and an invincible moral position for committing any folly and any crime in the way of armaments the moment they get into power, and that we can say good-bye to the chance of any agreement that is not wicked humbug being reached at a general "disarmament" conference, if and when such a thing is ever held.

That is a fairly mild example of several I received at about that time. The letter raises the question: Why is it that public men who, as publicists or members of an Opposition are consistent critics of continued armament and demand ruthless disarmament, become, as members of a Government, avowed or unavowed defenders of the thing which heretofore they criticised? Their sincerity is not in question. They are as incorruptible as they are sincere. What then happens to secure this change of attitude? In pre-war times, it was assumed that these Olympians, on attaining governmental heights, became

possessed of knowledge, secrets of state revealing mysterious dangers, unrevealed to the multitude. We used to get melodramatic rumours of an impending invasion, a sudden descent of some predatory neighbour—Germany in the period 1905-14, France in the generation preceding that. But there is none of that to-day. There is a general feeling, it is true, here and elsewhere, that France is a militarist power, believing in military force. But no one attributes to this keen-witted people the lunacy of a contemplated invasion of Great Britain, or an attack upon the British Empire, or an attack upon anyone. No one believes in the kind of invasion plot that tickled us before the war. What then is it that converts erstwhile pacifists into defenders of armaments? What is it that they fear? The question remains unanswered, at least by them.

The fact that it is not answered may have something to do in inspiring another type of letter, which happens also to be in personal and intimate terms, thus :

In the old days we used to discuss the right conclusion to be drawn from the facts which you suggested and the war has proved. A victorious enemy, you said, could not "take our property"—or take enough of it to pay for the cost of getting it. The present economic position of defeated and undefended Germany, not one whit worse, fundamentally, than that of ours, the victor, has shown how right you were. The conclusion I always wanted to draw was : "Why worry with defence? Let 'em come. If we're not 'defended' they won't come. And even if they did—if we got into a dispute so bitter that it provoked invasion—the outcome of the French invasion of the Ruhr shows that an unresisted invasion is to be preferred to a resisted one."

You never accepted this conclusion. It asked the common man in your view to take too wide a mental jump from familiar conceptions to unfamiliar. *Natura in operationibus suis non facit saltum*. The nationalist illusion—that addition of territory meant addition of wealth—was, in your view, too deeply rooted not to be acted upon, sometimes ruthlessly. You took the view that in the abolition of armaments we should have to pass by the "police" stage : the defence of each must be made the common job of the community of nations, and so on, and so on.

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I think you were wrong. The ordinary man is too busy or too stupid to grasp the distinction between armies as the defenders of the law of the international community, and armies as the means by which each asserts his own view of his own right against others. All that is too "logical" for the man in the street. Look how opinion has wobbled about sanctions. Half the time your League man does not know whether he is for or against them. It is only the specialists like Cecil, Gilbert Murray, Noel Baker, Wilson Harris, Arnold Forster, and perhaps a baker's dozen of others, together with the members of the secretariat, who realise the implications of the Covenant or have the intellectual guts to defend it. The usual discussion of these points is woolly wool. Not one in a hundred of those who discuss sanctions realise that the practical effect of these obligations is to make it extremely difficult to put navies or armies into movement at all, and that the practical effect of loosening the obligations is to make it extremely easy to put armed force into movement by making each his own judge of what constitutes defence. Of course, I know it is true that if you are going to wipe out the obligations for mutual aid you should abolish armies and navies altogether; and that if you keep armies and navies it is sheer lunacy not to tie the hands of those who possess them; that a world of Covenant-tied arms is a good deal safer than a world of Kellogg Pact arms. But, again, the ordinary man simply does not see the point at all. I believe it will be easier to go from the Kellogg Pact to non-resistance than from armed anarchy to a workable Covenant, an organised international society.

By the time the ordinary man is ready to confine the use of his national army to being the instrument of the international community he will be ready to abolish it altogether.

And so I'm an absolutist. Wipe out the whole damn thing. Sink 'em! *Spartakus versenkt.*

It has not seemed worth while to bowdlerise either of these letters, because the unparliamentary expressions are themselves a symptom of an important change of temper. Is the outcome of the disappointment which is now marking the lack of progress in disarmament to be a realignment of issues in this sense: On the one side, a policy of tenacious clutching to armaments with a drift back to the old order of armed anarchy, the League playing no real part in determining how the forces of the nations shall be assembled or used; on the other side, confronting this tendency, the advocacy of absolutist,

non-resistant pacifism, demanding the immediate and complete abolition of all armies and navies, while the third alternative, that of gradually reducing arms by making them subject to a League policy, disappears altogether?

It is one of the possibilities. It is the more possible because, curiously enough, the case for retention of arms, for the policy which every government at Disarmament Conferences pursues as a matter of course, has never been stated in analysable or rational terms. Each nation clutches its armaments and makes certain assumptions about "absolute needs"; but the very words, of course, make rubbish. "Need" in defensive armament must be relative since it is dependent upon the armaments of the potential enemy. A rational basis for retaining arms at all is assumed, not explained.

A great State like Germany seems pretty safe in a virtually disarmed condition; she gets along pretty well without armament. Why then this terror on the part of other States at even small reductions? Why would it be dangerous for Britain to disarm? Why the panic? We are confronted here with emotions which the war novel does not help us to understand.

On one condition and one condition only will the emotions of the war novel or the war play help us to get rid of war, namely, if the emotions lead to the question: "By what satanic tricks do men jockey themselves, or are men jockeyed, into such a situation that in order to do justice, to be secure in their rights, they must go to war?" Perhaps the question may be short-circuited thus: "By what moral sleight-of-hand does wrong become right?"

And though the answer to that question goes plainly so deep, it is not a difficult answer to make. The situation

which makes war inevitable and makes war in a sense what the Greek tragedian called it, the collision of two rights, arises from the assumption that when men get into a dispute each side is entitled to be the judge of that dispute. Underlying all the claims for rights, for defence, for independence, for sovereignty, for nationalism of the more truculent modern type, is the assumption that a nation is perfectly able to judge when it is acting fairly ; when, that is, it is acting defensively.

That is the grave trap involved in the Kellogg Pact as it stands. It assumes that the problem of war is the problem of honesty, or dishonesty, of intent ; that a solemn undertaking not to go to war save in defence will, if only the declaration is sincere, save the world from war. But it is precisely when the declaration on both sides is most sincere that the danger of its leading to war is greatest. That is written with no effort at catchy paradox, but as a simple statement of the truth that at the present stage of thought on international affairs *mere* goodwill may be dangerous.

Those who will have the greatest faith in this declaration and make it most sincerely and sweepingly will be those who believe that the distinction between defence and aggression is self-evident, and need not be the subject of previous agreement. They are those who will be most passionately convinced in a given case that all the right is on one side (their side) and all the wrong on the other side (the enemy's).

One has only to realise that that may well be quite sincerely the view of *both* sides to perceive that it is precisely their sincerity which will make the Pact dangerous unless there is pre-arrangement as to what defence really is.

If the world had realised that in almost every dispute

there are two sides ; that very seldom is all the wrong on one side and all the right on the other ; that absolute justice is unobtainable and that, therefore, there is an obligation on all to accept something less than absolute justice ; that man is so imperfect and passions of partisanship so strong that no litigant in a dispute is qualified to be its own judge—if all that had been recognised as especially true of international disputes, the nations, long before this, would have agreed upon third-party judgment, arbitration, courts, as the means of determining most of the disputes that arise between them. And that general decision would have created before this an accepted code of reciprocal rights ; a body of practice that would have constituted a law of the world. If that had been the habit of thought, " the right of self-defence " would not have included, as by implication it now does, the right to be judge of what our own rights are.

The interesting question, as throwing light upon the way in which public opinion moves in international affairs, is this : Is the Kellogg Pact popular because its implications are fully understood, or because they are not ? In either event the Pact constitutes a vast change of feeling. Does it also constitute an advance in understanding ? What the implications of the Pact, and the alternatives presented by it, really are, is discussed elsewhere. The point which concerns us in this connection is whether the new spirit has helped to secure acceptance of the Pact by emotional confusion, or emotional clarification.

The fundamental method of the Pact is to depend upon the sincerity of the signatories in their declaration that they will not make war, and to relegate concrete problems of international organisation to a secondary position—secondary, at least, in point of time if not in point of

importance. Such an approach suggested twenty years ago would have been buried in a gale of derisive laughter. It is the expression of the extreme Pacifist position ; the more completely idealist and sweeping as opposed to the more realist, tentative and " practical " approach. In no quarter would derision of this method of " trusting the dear, good foreigner " (as a militarist once described it) have been greater than among some of the present protagonists of the Pact.

Is it a good sign, or a bad sign, that a militarist world, and a militarist public mind, should have taken to itself pacifism, not piecemeal, but holus-bolus, at the most extreme end ? If we were sure that the public as a whole, especially in America, realised the implications of placing its main hope in this approach, one could rejoice unreservedly. But are the implications realised ?

That question is particularly important by reason of the hopes which are being built upon disarmament, largely due to the public believing that the Kellogg Pact has already achieved some real revolution in the international situation, and not merely " prepared the atmosphere ". Certainly, on the American side, the general belief was current that international agreements for keeping the peace need go little beyond the Pact (as witness Senator Borah's recent declaration concerning the Pact in its relation to the Optional Clause and the " freedom of the seas "). What will be the reaction of the public mind to a fuller realisation of what the Kellogg Pact (regarded as in itself an adequate instrument of peace and disarmament) is asking of the nations ?

Recall for a moment what is involved if the Pact, as it stands, is to fulfil the expectations of some of those who snatched at it as the royal road.

Heretofore, in the international field we have had a

condition of nearly unqualified anarchy, in which the States have depended, not upon any system of co-operation, but upon the competition of naked force ruthlessly employed. There was never a pirate, never a robber, who would, with such unconcern, subject women, children, helpless old folk, to mutilation, death, misery, with the unconcern that a highly civilised, belligerent State employs when it sinks *Lusitanias*, as did the Germans ; bombs cities, as did all the belligerents ; employs the weapon of starvation and disease, as did Great Britain, not only during the war but in the weary months that followed, when there seemed no visible military reason to employ it at all.

From this particular standard—or defiance—of ethics, supported until yesterday by great writers, poets, orators, statesmen, bishops, by organised religion, by those who have charge of the formation of the minds of youth, from a standard thus overwhelmingly supported, it is proposed to make a sudden jump to an international order from which force shall be abolished and coercion shall never in any circumstances be employed at all ; in which there shall be nothing corresponding to police, to any pre-arranged method for the restraint of lawlessness, panic, or passion—nothing, that is, except the rather important qualification that each shall retain arms for “ defence ”. It is proposed, in the relationship of States, to jump over altogether the present stage of development in the matter of force or coercion as we know it *within* the nation ; the stage, that is, in which the individual is protected by a law or code to the support of which the collective power of the community as a whole is pledged ; so that the power of any one individual attempting aggression, or defiance of law, is cancelled out.

The existence of coercion of any kind, of police, of

courts, restrictive legislation, regulations, is an indication of very great imperfections in human nature. If we were all socially minded, not liable to anti-social impulses and one-sided views of our rights, most of this apparatus of coercion would be quite unnecessary. But, however much it may be proof of human imperfection, the immense majority of ordinary men and women accept it as palpably, demonstrably, inevitable. The proposal to abolish police or other means of enforcing the law, would, by nine hundred and ninety-nine ordinary persons out of a thousand be regarded as the most outrageous nonsense ; an utterly impracticable proposal. No orderly and highly organised society has ever known such a condition, no such society has ever tried it. To propose it would mark the proposer as the dreamer type of crank with no sense of realities, of the nature of the world in which he lives.

But it is precisely this proposal which is of the essence of the Kellogg Pact, although the international society to which it is proposed to apply it has a definitely lower standard of social tradition and morality than that which has been evolved within the State. The conduct of nations is marked by such immoralisms as " my country, right or wrong ". Nothing quite so barbarous dare be asserted as the guide of individual conduct. What individuals with their higher standard of social morality, with their elaborately developed system of law and well-defined code of rights, would not be able to do and would never dream for a moment of attempting, the nations, it is claimed, with their lower standard of morality, with virtually no developed code of rights, will be able successfully to accomplish. The nations, we assume, will be able to skip that stage and pass from a state of ruthless competitive anarchy to one in which peaceful and orderly life will be possible without the existence of anything

corresponding to the rôle which the police play in every organised society that history has known.

The case has been so stated, not with any desire to prompt the conclusion that the Kellogg Pact method of approach is necessarily wrong—that conclusion is not drawn—but simply with a view to bringing out clearly the assumption which may explain its popularity, and the disappointments which may lie in wait.

But that does not exclude the belief that for nations to give the undertakings of the Pact may be a very excellent way of bringing the whole problem home to the public, of starting the necessary discussion upon it. Our job is to see that its implications are understood. If they are, and the emotions behind are genuine, it will be the precursor of great and fruitful developments. If we shut our eyes to the implications it may well prove the precursor of a vast disappointment ; to a mood of cynicism on which our hopes may founder.

